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Taking the stage

Local girl brings coveted role in seasonal classic to life

See story on page 6

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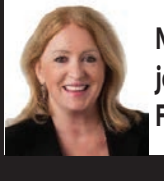
Nancy Avery joins the Finer Team

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QUOTE OF NOTE:

"We all come from different musical backgrounds and I think this is one of the many qualities that makes us unique and special." - *Ann-Marie Colebrook of the musical group Wait for It.*

See story page 14

ON THE COVER

Sofia Brummitt is realizing every young ballerina's dream.

Photo by Lisa Brisson
See story page 6

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Photo by Danielle Marie Photography

Jennifer Haffner checks a detail at a recent "bloom gathering" that she hosted through her company, Barn Door Blooms.

Getting her hands in the dirt

Barn Door Blooms brings people together for flower parties

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Jennifer Haffner's great-grandfather used to grow dahlias. She remembers them being taller than she was with blooms the size of her head, as well as his generosity in sharing the giant flowers.

"Growing up, I always loved gardening. Many of my family memories revolve around flowers," Haffner, who is from Chatham, MA, said.

After graduating from Fairfield University with a major in organizational communications, she moved to Boston, where her jobs included doing exhibits and special events for publisher Houghton Mifflin Company in Boston and working as a program planner for Biogen Idec in Cambridge.

She also spent six years as marketing events manager for AIR Worldwide Corporation in Boston, where, among other duties, she handled events in places such as Munich, Zurich, Beijing, Tokyo, Singapore, London, Bermuda, Sydney, Brussels, Barcelona and Prague.

Six years ago, she and her husband, Hellmut Haffner, a major in the Army National Guard, moved to Glastonbury where they live with their sons Benjamin, 6, and Christian, 3.

During her husband's first deployment in 2009, she'd started Ellen Macy Events, a wedding planning company that focused on Cape Cod weddings. At the time, she was still working at AIR Worldwide and living part-time in Boston and part-time on the Cape.

Even after moving to Connecticut in May 2011, she kept that business running until 2014, when she started working for Celebration Meetings and Events in Glastonbury.

"We did cool events; I definitely enjoyed it. I had hoped the business would evolve into a partnership, but the owner decided to pursue a different career path. I always knew I wanted to go out on my own. I thought this is my opportunity to start mine," Haffner said.

Early in 2017, hearkening back to her childhood love of gardening, Haffner launched Barn Door Blooms.

"Barn Door Blooms is a company that celebrates the joy of flowers through events and real flower arrangements. It's the fusion of my passion for events and flowers," she said.

"Growing up, I always loved gardening. Many of my family memories revolve around flowers."

–Jennifer Haffner

At the core of her business are group events, called bloom gatherings, where she brings flowers and all the supplies for participants to complete a project, whether that's a wreath, potted bulbs or an arrangement. She can customize the project to an organization, theme or the time of year.

"I host flower-based events. Right now, they've all been private events. I host flower-arranging parties. You're getting together a bunch of friends. I bring all of the supplies, the flowers, share the tricks of the trade," Haffner explained of the two-hour sessions. "I'll show you how to arrange the flowers and help [participants] as they go. We talk about the flowers. It's more meant to have fun than to get into super-technical flower design."

Carolyn Houlihan of Glastonbury attended an event in October where they made arrangements using local flowers.

"I loved being hands on with flowers, something I usually buy pre-assembled. It was so fun to create my own arrangement just how I wanted it to be. I was stuck a few times and it was great to get pointers and help from Jenni. It was such a fun way to connect with friends while doing something creative," she said.

Houlihan enjoyed it so much that she is hosting her own event in December to make Christmas centerpieces.

"I think this is such a great event because you get to be creative, catch

up with friends and learn some really great tools to make arrangements at home yourself," she said.

Haffner usually asks for a minimum of 10 people to hold an event and features seasonal specials on projects. She was at the Glastonbury Farmers' Market this past summer to introduce the concept.

"So many people would tell me what a wonderful idea it was. It takes a conversation for them to understand what it is," Haffner who also has created centerpieces for Birch Hill Tavern, said. "I live right down the street from them. He's been very supportive of my small business."

She would like to host her own events that are open to the public, but right now she is focusing on private events, whether for individuals or organizations, including fundraisers and team-building events.

As much as possible, she is using flowers from local farms, including from Gutt Family Farm in Glastonbury.

"I'm still building those relationships with flower farms; I like to support local farmers. I think you just get better flowers that way, more unique flowers, fresher flowers, and it's nice to enjoy flowers from where you live. While you can get your hands on anything you want any time of year now, I much prefer to support the seasonality of the flowers locally," she said.

Sometimes local means right from her own yard.

"My husband and I have a small cutting garden," she said.

Haffner believes Barn Door Blooms, in addition to being a local small business, offers a good alternative for people who are looking for a social activity that's a little different.

"It's really about enjoying flowers and friends. It's a really nice way of getting together with people and enjoying yourself. It's a very personalized, customized approach to spending time together," Haffner said.

It seems an appropriate venture for Haffner, who can still picture the dahlias her great-grandfather grew.

"I always have fresh flowers in my house, whether from the store or my gardens, I just love having them around. You can bring a little of the outside inside when you're cooped up in your house," she said. "Working with flowers just brings me joy. I can't think of a greater gift of joy than to get flowers. I can't think of a greater joy than to get my hands in the dirt." **GL**

Learn more at barndoorblooms.com.

Photo by Danielle Marie Photography

Fiona Kirk from Glastonbury and her mother, Frances Leng from Chesterfield, England, show off their floral creations at a recent Barn Door Blooms Event.

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Sofia Brummitt is on her toes

Seventh-grader will perform coveted role of Clara in 'The Nutcracker'

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

Courtesy photo

Twelve-year-old Sofia Brummitt estimated she's been dancing about 10 years, since she was two. Her mother, Michele Prizio, took it a step farther.

"She came out dancing," she said with a smile.

This year Sofia, a seventh-grader at Smith Middle School, will realize one of her dreams as she performs the role of Clara in the Ballet Theatre Company's production of Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker."

Sofia studied for one year at a local dance school, then switched to the West Hartford school to specialize in ballet.

There, she has performed in the company's annual production of the holiday classic since she was in kindergarten, starting in the Chinese tea dance and progressing through increasingly difficult roles as a child at the house party, a baby mouse and a snow angel before performing as a soloist in the Chinese tea dance last year.

Clara is a coveted role.

"Clara is every little girl's dream," her mother said. "This little girl's dream."

Asked what she likes best about ballet, Sofia smiled. "The performing part, learning all the different steps. I don't know. It's fun," she said.

Students who want to be part of "The Nutcracker" cast need to audition before classes start in the fall. Those hoping to land the larger roles need to be students in the school. As Clara, Sofia attends classes Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and also takes part in rehearsals Saturday and Sunday.

At Smith, she performs in the school band and jazz band and loves studying art and science.

She is one of several students whose art was chosen to appear in the local school system's calendar last year.

Her talent is not surprising. Her father, Eric Brummitt, is a music teacher and professional French horn player, and her mother teaches

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"The performing part, learning all the different steps. I don't know. It's fun."

– Sofia Brummitt

cello and performs often. Her sister, Rose, plays guitar.

Sofia is younger than many girls chosen as Clara.

Stephanie Dattellas, a Glastonbury resident and the Ballet Theatre Company's artistic director, said it is a well-deserved honor.

"Sofia was selected to play Clara for many reasons," Dattellas said. "She is a beautiful technician who demonstrates professional qualities at such a young age, not to mention she is very driven and dedicated to improving her technique and artistry. Above all, you can always expect Sofia to exude passion and joy when she is dancing, which the role demands."

She said that as a dancer selected for the student dance company, known as Ballet Theatre Company II, Sofia has the opportunity to train at a higher level and experience professional dance at a young age.

Dattellas said dancers in the student dance company must enroll in four ballet technique classes and three pointe classes a week, including two that she teaches. It's all part of a pre-professional program for qualified dancers.

"Ballet Theatre Company requires students to enroll in such a vigorous schedule so that they are in proper shape for the company's production rehearsals and understand the discipline and dedication that ballet demands in the professional world," she said.

The production, which will take place December 14 through 17 at the University of Saint Joseph in West Hartford, will include new choreography designed by Dattellas as well as brand new Chinese Tea, Angel and Polichinelle scenes. **GL**

To learn more about the Ballet Theatre Company's production of The Nutcracker or to buy tickets, visit dancebtc.org.

Sofia Brummitt will dance the role of Clara in the Ballet Theatre Company's production of The Nutcracker this year.

Courtesy photo

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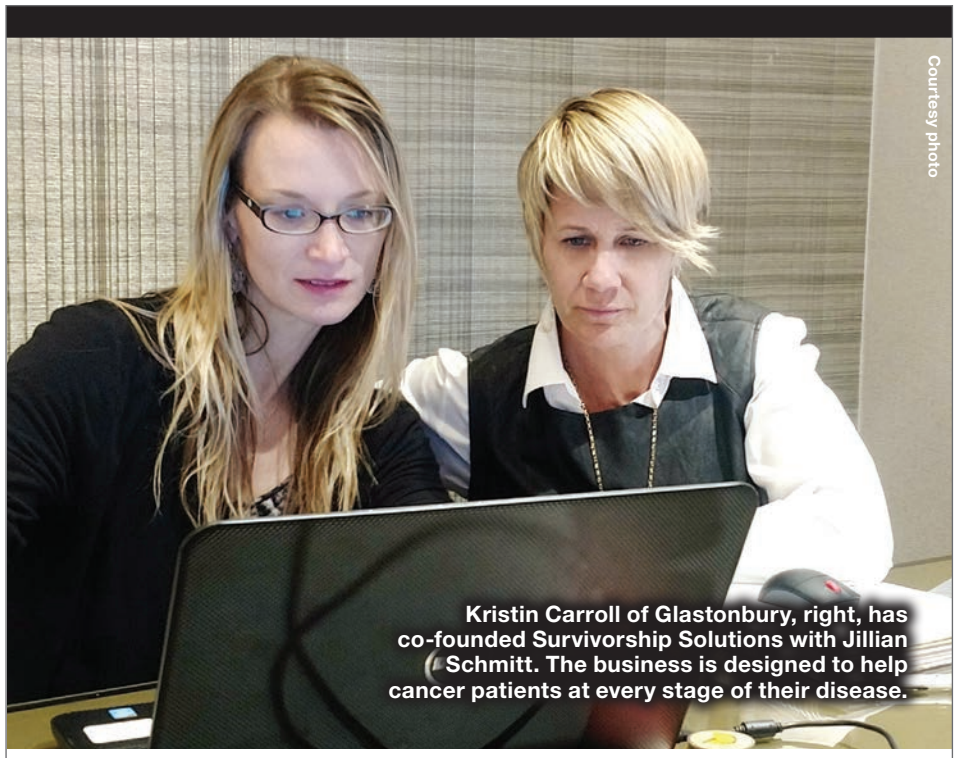
Courtesy photo

Kristin Carroll of Glastonbury, right, has co-founded Survivorship Solutions with Jillian Schmitt. The business is designed to help cancer patients at every stage of their disease.

Helping cancer survivors lead better lives

Glastonbury woman co-founds Survivorship Solutions

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Kristin Carroll is a physical therapist with more than 25 years of clinical experience, the last 10 years as a specialist in oncology rehabilitation. An educator at both the system and collegiate level, her passion for oncology led her to co-found Survivorship Solutions, LLC, a cancer rehabilitation and survivorship consultancy firm, where she serves as co-CEO and executive director of clinical operations. Survivorship Solutions partners with doctors, hospitals and healthcare institutions nationally to implement and optimize cancer care services for cancer survivors to maintain their quality-of-life from diagnosis through end of treatment.

Carroll has completed Oncology Nursing Society coursework in chemotherapy, biotherapy and radiation, lymphedema training and oncology rehabilitation specialization courses. She is a member of the American Physical Therapy Association, Oncology Section; the Connecticut Lymphedema Consortium and the Association of Community Cancer Centers. She spoke at the 2017 International Breast Cancer Rehabilitation and Wellness Symposium and has been on national podcasts, speaking about cancer rehabilitation. Carroll also continues to work as an oncological physical therapist in the home-care and outpatient arenas.

Q. How did your interest in oncology begin?

A. I used to be a [site] director at Hartford Healthcare Rehabilitation Network in Glastonbury. My director asked me if I'd be willing go and take some coursework ... to learn how to treat cancer patients. My mom is a breast cancer survivor; my grandmother is as well, and my brother has a brain tumor, so I very well know the effects from a personal standpoint. So I certainly said I would absolutely love to do that.

I went and got certified in treating lymphedema, and the effects of chemotherapy and radiation, and became competent in treating people with cancer.

Q. As a physical therapist, what does it mean to specialize in oncology rehabilitation?

A. Physical therapy really focuses on any physical or functional impairment they might have, whether it's strength or balance or pain or sexual dysfunction. Whatever the impairment, we are able to treat that. We really are trying to focus on identifying problems they might come into the cancer diagnosis with, Maybe they have a rotator cuff tear even before they have breast cancer surgery. Then they are even more at risk for developing problems. We work through the whole continuum of care, after surgery through chemotherapy, radiation and reconstructive surgery to help them achieve their best life, to continue to work, to care for their family, whatever they need to do to keep their normalcy.

Q. How did you connect with Jillian Schmitt, with whom you co-founded Survivorship Solutions?

A. Jillian and I had worked together. When I left Hartford Hospital, I became a consultant working with hospitals across the country with Oncology Rehab Partners. I had 43 hospitals I worked with in New England and I taught them how to either implement cancer rehabilitation or how to optimize the programs they already had. That company went under; McKesson closed the doors last August. And when they closed their doors, I said, "I've never lost my job in 27 years of being a physical therapist. What am I going to do?" I went back to my old clinic, per diem, for someone who was on maternity leave.

I had a lot of my old hospitals calling me, asking, "Can you continue helping us?" Jillian and I were very close. She was a colleague from Oncology Rehab Partners in Chicago, handling about 50 hospitals in the Midwest. Her hospitals were also calling her. ... She said, "I was thinking about starting my own company. What do you say we do this together?"

There was such a need. Our prior company was the only company in the United States that did this.

Q. Tell me about Survivorship Solutions.

A. Cancer rehabilitation is just really one service that somebody going through cancer would need. We decided it was really important for our company to focus on any kind of service or program somebody would need going through cancer: nutritional counseling, psycho-social support, pain management, anything somebody might need going through cancer treatment to have the best life. We wanted to teach hospitals how to hardwire that as a process into their system so every single patient gets the same exact experience or opportunity. When there's no process there's so many people who fall through cracks of our busy system.

We consult with doctors, hospitals and larger healthcare systems across the country, and we educate them, the whole team, about the needs of cancer patients, and then we help them implement a process into their system so that patients can get the services they need.

Q. Why is this needed?

A. Cancer is a very different culture. It's a very different disease than say if you had a knee replacement or if you had a stroke. That's because it's such a complex disease. You may need five doctors to treat it. There are so many different doctors to take care of you and so many different treatments, it's often hard for these providers to say who's really in charge of this patient. A lot of times these physicians are in private practice. They have privileges at the hospitals. They don't know what a physical therapist does for someone with cancer. Historically, it's an oncologist's job to treat the disease of cancer. Historically, it's been a team of one. Now, the world of cancer is changing; the standards are changing. Now, it's very much a multidisciplinary team approach to care.

Cancer survivors *continued on page 37*

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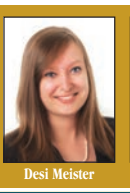
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Glastonbury artist finds inspiration from Iowa to Japan

Denny Jones creates jewelry, pottery

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Denny Jones enjoys creating jewelry, such as link necklaces and hammered bracelets.

Photo by Mara Dresner

Growing up in rural Iowa, artist Denny Jones was entranced by a one-man blacksmith shop just across the street.

"I used to watch him endlessly pounding iron and steel," he said. "My grandfather's farm also had a blacksmith shop, and I would hammer out nails and spikes into knives and swords and playthings."

After his freshman year at Dennison University, where he was a history major, he worked for three

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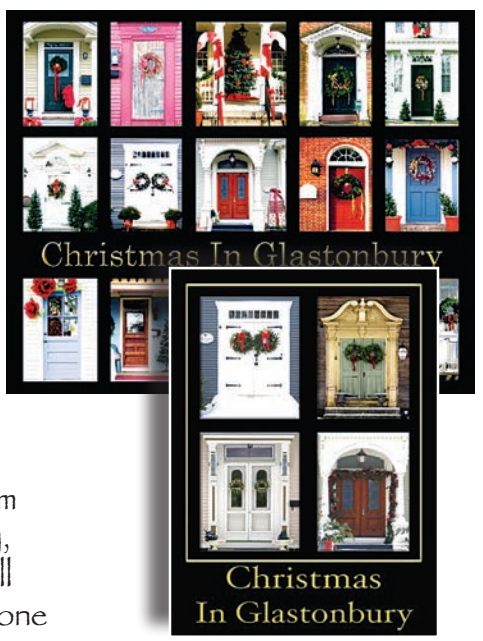

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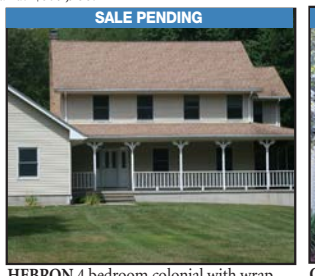
SALE PENDING



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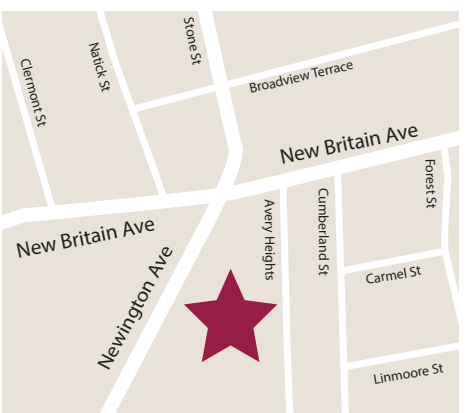

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"I want them just to feel, 'Oh I like that.' The mug fits. The bowl works. The bracelet looks good on the arm. That's all."

–Denny Jones

months as a civilian for the Army in Japan and Korea.

"It was a deep cultural immersion in a lot of ways," he noted.

While there, he again was struck by artistic inspiration.

"I was on a bus to a remote Army station when the bus blew a tire and the spare was in a truck that had gone ahead of us. We were stuck, a handful of us, in a pottery village in the middle of nowhere. I watched an old man throw kimchi bowls and it was magic. He just kicked this stick in the ground until it would rotate and he would throw on the clay and suddenly form a beautiful bowl," he remembered.

Later, in an isolated part of Japan, he discovered an art exhibit.

"There was a middle-aged man who spoke beautiful English who was showing his pottery. I spent several hours learning what he could tell me about pottery-making and his life as a potter, and that was intriguing," Jones said.

Still, he proceeded on a more practical path.

After graduate school he was on his way to Boston for a job interview when he stopped in Hartford to visit with an acquaintance who worked for the State of Connecticut. The friend took him over to the regional planning agency, which hired him on the spot. He worked there until the agency dissolved, then went to work for an engineering firm.

"The only house for rent in the entire area was a funny little cape in Glastonbury," Jones said, explaining how he ended up in town in 1968. "This is going back a long time."

He started to feel the need to do something more beyond his day job.

"From the office work, I needed a release, to do something with my hands," he said.

He first took pottery classes with local potter Lois Eldridge in the early 1970s, then began taking classes at the Glastonbury Art Guild, now Glastonbury Arts.

Later, he took classes at Wesleyan Potters in Middletown and became a member there in 1985.

Today, Jones makes both functional and decorative pottery as well as jewelry.

"Pottery and silversmithing are hobbies. I've never tried to make an income to speak of off of that. They're good hobbies. You can sell them and it pays for keeping going," he said.

Still, he sells his work at Wesleyan Potters and his work will be featured at the studio's Annual Show and Sale, which runs through December 10. He's also sold items at a gallery on Cape Cod.

"If I get too productive, I am going to have to find more outlets, I guess," he said. "It just hasn't been a commercial outlet for me; it's just part of me."

His jewelry work features a variety of styles, much of it involving links.

"I make a lot of rings by wrapping it around a dowel, a rod, and then you solder it so it doesn't show as a solder, and you link them all together," he explained.

He works primarily in silver, although he does some brass work as well, including brass cuff bracelets.

"Some of it's hammered; some of it's rolled. It's much like an old washing machine wringer only big rollers. You put the metal through with something that can impress a pattern, even paper, part of that is a window screen," he said of a particular pattern. "But I do love the hammering. I used to do more intricate things but I kind of like plain and simple. The hammering is enjoyable to create a pattern. You also by way of hammering can shape the metal. If you think of it more like clay or dough, it responds to the hammering. You can make flowers or leaves or any number of forms. I just like the feeling that OK, I did this. I know making necklaces is a little bit mindless for me. It's repetitive but that's a certain kind of therapy too."

His designs are appealing even to those who typically aren't jewelry people.

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"I don't wear a ton of jewelry. He makes the kinds of jewelry I like to wear, comfortable, everyday pieces. His bangles are the kind of thing I like to wear. They're simple; they go with everything; they're kind of classic. I think his work is real collectible. And they fit my budget," said Liz Blodgett, Wesleyan Potters' office manager and an instructor.

She said she enjoys chatting with Jones.

"Denny's the type of person come in the office and he loves research; and he loves art history. He loves talking about art and artists and exhibits. He's the type of guy who sits down at lunch and we'll have a great conversation. He just loves art," she said.

Jones, who said he's "long-retired," said he sometimes sketches out his designs before he makes a piece, but often doesn't.

"It depends on how intricate something's going to be. I'm not a strong one on the sketchbook like some people and most artists should be. I do keep a sketchbook on I should try this or that idea. Or 20 ways to make a pin with a certain jewel in it; you work out proportions," he said.

He enjoys experimenting in the process itself.

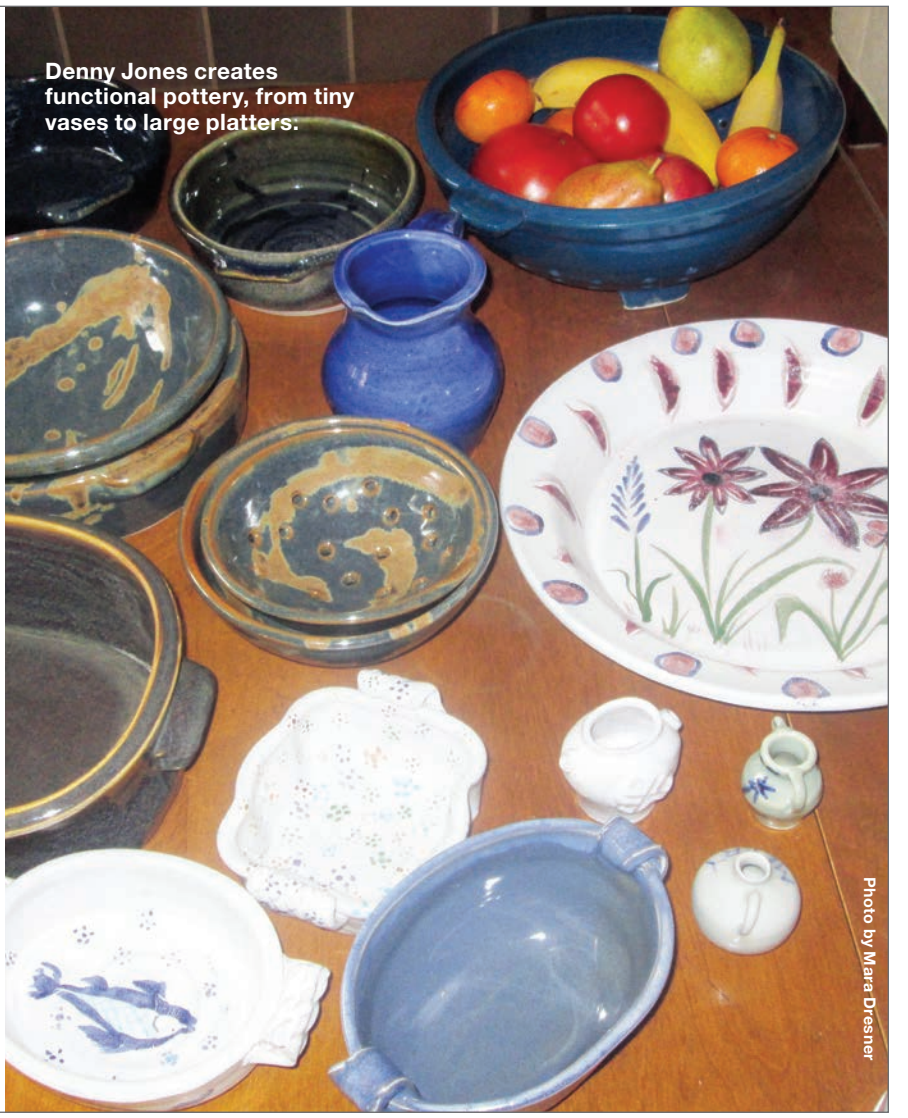
"When there's an excitement of trying something new and different, there's trying things that don't work out. Like I had an idea for this," he said, picking up a bracelet. "It's just worthless. I have to turn it in as scrap."

More and more, he's finding himself drawn to jewelry.

"I have recognized in myself that it's easier. I think my attention span is getting shorter. With jewelry I can set up and work for a while and put it all away quickly and be done. With pottery you have a pretty sticky mess. You have to clean up and you're also committed to coming back. It has to dry so you can trim it. Then it has to dry some more and you put it in the kiln so you can glaze it. Then you have to wait a month to see how it came out. I like that process, but jewelry is kind of more immediately rewarding," he noted.

His goal is to make a simple connection to those who buy his products.

"I want them just to feel, 'Oh I like that,'" he said. "The mug fits. The bowl works. The bracelet looks good on the arm. That's all." GL



Denny Jones creates functional pottery, from tiny vases to large platters.

Photo by Mara Dresner

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Davie deMercado, Ann-Marie Colebrook, Leslie Bates and Bill Moses entertain audiences with a wide variety of songs ranging from the classics to rock and roll.

Sue Mosas photo

From Peter Pan to Sam the Sham

Local songsters combine talents to entertain

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

At first glance, the members of the local singing group Wait for It seem to be an unlikely quartet.

Bill Moses worked in the state judicial branch's child support program. Ann-Marie Colebrook is the director of health and physical education for the local school system. Leslie Bates is an elementary school teacher, and David deMercado is a classically trained French horn player who has worked in information technology and as a personal chef.

But a closer look reveals four lifetimes of music, a shared love of performing, and an ability to make old songs sound new.

Their collaboration began five years ago when Bates and Moses created a new arrangement for an old American hymn, "Holy Manna" and sang it at the Congregational Church in South Glastonbury, where they are members of the choir.

"We began with a core of church-related music and have branched out beyond that," said Moses, whose musical background is in rock and roll, blues and country and who plays guitar, harmonica and fiddle. "We came up with a rock and roll, folk music-type arrangement and kind of enlivened the old song. The lyrics enabled the music style and

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GLASTONBURY **$329,900**
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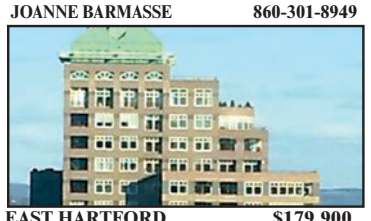

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"Whether they sing in church or in a coffee shop or on the street corner, Wait for It is bringing light to a troubled world."

when we sang it at church people liked us. It made us as singers really excited about combining musical styles."

He said the group's repertoire ranges from hymn-writer Isaac Watts to Bruce Springsteen.

"We'll do songs from Stephen Foster, the first American pop song writer, Appalachian mountain music with jazz vocals, Bob Dylan, Tender Shepherd from Peter Pan to Woolly Bully by Sam the Sham. We have no shame. We'll pull out anything," he said.

Moses described Colebrook and Bates as the group's sparkplugs. "They're like a sports car. You can turn them on and let them go," he said.

Colebrook, who majored in health and physical education at Central Connecticut State University, said she almost majored in music education instead. She was active in music in high school. There, she performed with the school choir and with the All-Eastern and All-State choirs and also with the band, where she played baritone horn. At Central, she played the euphonium with the marching band for four hears and learned to play the guitar.

She taught and coached for more than 18 years in Newington, where she sang and played trumpet in an adult band called Show Daz. The band supported student performances and often performed with school groups.

Colebrook sang in the church choir for a while but stopped because of her busy schedule.

"I missed singing," she said of her hiatus from the choir. She met Moses and Bates, sang with them at church from time to time. About a year later they invited deMercado to join them, and the foursome performed at a variety of events there.

She said she enjoys singing with the others, and respects their talent and musical backgrounds. "We all come from different musical backgrounds and I think this is one of the many qualities that makes us unique and special. It is very apparent that we all have a love for music which comes out in our performance," she said. "I have always had a love for all kind of music. Being a member of Wait for It keeps me involved in singing, which has always been a part of my soul."

Colebrook recalled how the group came up with its unusual name.

"When we tried to think of a name for our group, we brainstormed many names," she said. "Like our style of music and how we end up arranging songs, someone just suggested why don't we wait for it."

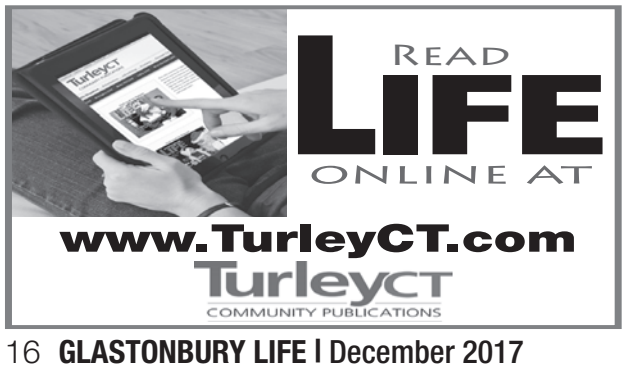
Bates, who teaches fifth grade in West Hartford, studied at the Boston Conservatory of Music and New York University. She lived for a while in New York, where she performed around the city, regionally and on a cruise ship.

"Working with Ann Marie, Bill and David is joy-filled, as they are wonderful people and talented musicians," she said. "As a group we enjoy exploring a variety of musical genres, and individually tagging in whenever a member of the group suggests an unexpected, uncommon and sometimes whimsical musical idea. I feel blessed to be a part of Wait for It!"

Mercado, a classically trained French horn player, was skilled in reading music, following a conductor, performing and improvising. Even so, playing with the group was a surprise.

"The first rehearsal with the group was both eye- and ear-opening," he said. "I was confronted with a folder of tunes, only a couple that I had ever heard, with no lead sheet or chords to work from. Most of our arranging and performing is all by ear. At first, this was a bit daunting, [and I wondered] how am I going to do this? Well in short order, I was drawn into a creative process that is as profound and beautiful to me today as the first time I rehearsed. The process is where someone finds a song, has a feeling for a style, or a composer, or a genre. Into the musical hopper it goes, and we proceed to 'Wait-For-ize-It'. That is my term for the creative process where we put our unique spin on a given piece, working out harmonies, diving into the meaning of the text, using rhythmic, temporal and dynamic means to make the piece unique, our own. It is a creative process, it is love- and respect-driven, as everyone has an equal voice, a viewpoint, a thought, an intuitive glimmer; this all then gets melted down to what for me, becomes a bit of gold in the form of a collaboratively created song."

He recalled one "particularly fascinating performance opportunity"



LET'S REMEMBER
Together
For some, it has been a difficult year and the holidays, traditionally a time of celebration, can magnify a tragedy or loss. We've found that remembering a loved one with a special tribute or a memorial service often helps families work through difficult times. If you have lost a loved one, please join us for our holiday program and we'll take a moment to remember and celebrate that life ... together.
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when he and Moses were asked to perform a faith statement for a young man who was being confirmed. The statement had been created to the rhythmic meter of Don McLean's "American Pie" so they decided to set to the music of that song.

He had so much fun that he wanted to become part of the group. "I started dropping hints that if they ever had another gig I would love to come along for the ride," he said. "It wasn't too much longer before that opportunity presented itself, I joined the group, immediately loved the interaction, and haven't looked back since."

Alexandrina Sergio, the town's poet laureate, has engaged Wait for It to perform as part of two music and poetry programs. "I can say that the delight and wonder of Wait For It lies in this quartet's broad appeal," she said. "Everyone loves them! Their unique sound is eminently accessible. The four often write their own material, tailoring it to the occasion. It is evident that not only are Ann Marie, Leslie, Bill and David highly talented and professional, they are good-humored, individually and collectively, and love what they are doing."

Sue Moses photo

Wait for It consist of Davie deMercado, Ann-Marie Colebrook, Leslie Bates and Bill Moses

The Rev. Dick Allen, the senior minister at the Congregational Church in South Glastonbury, believes the group's music offers help to a troubled world.

"I am always excited when people tap into their passion, claim their spiritual gift, and bless others by sharing that gift," he said. "Wait for It has done just that! They started singing together and realized they had found a wondrous harmony. The world yearns for music that touches the soul. As soon as I heard the music of Wait for It, I knew I had encountered a sound that will contribute to peace. Whether they sing in church or in a coffee shop or on the street corner, Wait for It is bringing light to a troubled world." **GL**

Wait for It is available to perform at public and private events. To learn more, visit waitforitmusic.com.

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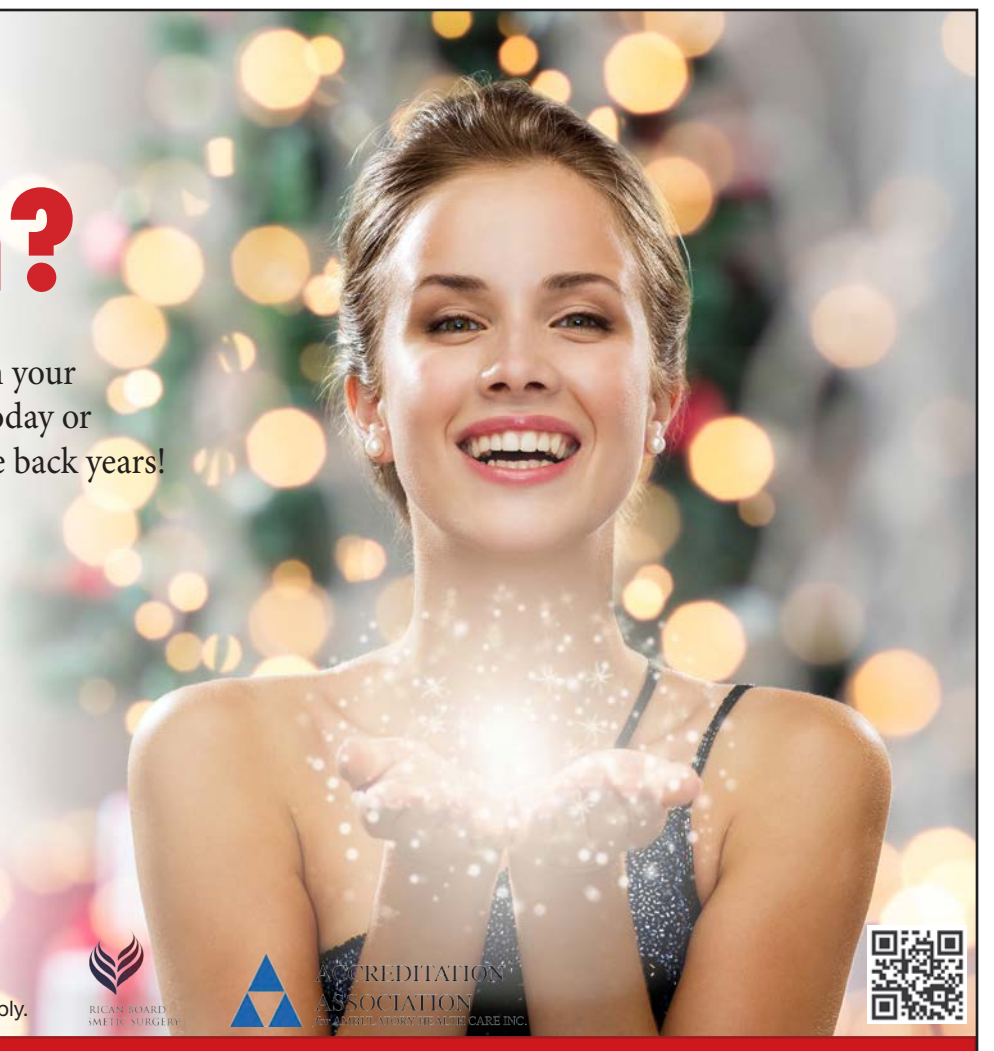

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Opening the mind to *gratefulness*

Yoga practitioners share their tips for finding calm

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

Sure, it's the most wonderful time of the year, but between the mile-long to-do list and the crowds and the cold and all the demands on your time, it can sometimes be a challenge to be grateful, even as we have a holiday that reminds us to give thanks.

If you've ever taken a yoga class and spent a few blissful moments in savasana, you probably know that yoga can calm the mind. But even yoga instructors have to deal with long lines and traffic jams.

"Yoga teaches stillness, presence; it quiets the mind. However, it is a practice, and we are all human. Sometimes my house is a mess, the kids are running around, the dog is barking; at the same time I'm trying to make dinner and the doorbell rings. Life can be a test of patience. At that moment I have a choice. Do I scream, or can I take a deep breath and find gratitude for this crazy life of mine? So, I bring my hand to my belly and feel the breath come into my body and then exhale and focus on letting go. Again, it's a practice, and staying focused for just a few seconds can be work in the beginning, but with practice I can take control of the thoughts and come back to stillness, feeling gratitude for all of my many blessings," said Shelley Jansen, studio director of Bikram Yoga Glastonbury.

Jansen started her own yoga practice in 1998 while living in Australia. After moving back to the U.S. in 2000, she was introduced to Bikram Yoga and attended training in Los Angeles in 2002, opening her own studio in 2003.

While Jansen said that a Yoga Asana class can be a good place to start, you can also begin in the here and now.

Just go outside.

"Simply taking a walk in the woods and being very conscious of the trees and the leaves can be a perfect place to start," she added.

Richard Mercer of Bikram Yoga Simsbury in Weatogue knows a little something about stress. A former full-scholarship Division 1A college football player, he previously worked as a vice president at Travelers, running an IT division.

"I've been practicing Bikram Yoga since 2004 when I was in my late 40s. I heard about it through a friend and, although I had never done yoga before, after my first class I knew it would be a lifelong practice," he said.

At the time, although he could lift a lot of weight, he couldn't get his arms over his head or touch his toes.

"What I found surprising, however, was the effect yoga had on relaxing my mind. I didn't realize how much I needed the brain break as well as the stretching. I convinced my [now wife] Laurie to try it with me, and she found it helped with her neck and back pain and also with handling the stress of

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her job. Being able to share the experience was great," he noted.

After practicing Bikram for a few years, he decided to go for teacher training, attending a nine-week, full-time teacher training in Hawaii with more than 300 people from more than 40 countries.

"I called Laurie and told her that this was a business; we needed to open a studio. I quit my corporate job, and we opened Bikram Yoga Simsbury in 2009. Laurie went to teacher training in 2010, so we both teach," he said.

Mercer noted the benefits are far-reaching.

"You [learn to] understand the saying, 'If you are not grateful for what you have, you'll never be grateful for what you think you want.' I thought that all there was was the business, corporate world. Opening this yoga business makes me personally grateful because I believe it saved my life and has helped so many others improve their own lives," he said.

He recommends not doing too much too soon.

"Just come in and start. Don't expect too much right away, just take your time and let it happen. A regular yoga practice allows your mind to be calm and to focus, and this creates the space for gratefulness. We always encourage our folks to appreciate the small improvements, millimeters of improvement in flexibility and strength. The peacefulness, the calmness that yoga brings, this opens the mind to gratefulness."

Julie Starr, owner of Starr Yoga in West Hartford, also noted that the postures aren't the goal.

"The practice of yoga is just one of the eight 'paths of yoga.' The physical practice helps you feel certain things that you can then apply to situations off your mat. One of these is gratitude. When you focus on your breath in class, you feel grateful for your lungs and the air that we breathe. Every morning I am thankful to be alive and have healthy organs so I can breathe comfortably. The physical poses are challenging and remind me to be thankful for my body and its ability to do the poses. When I walk my daughter to school, I am thankful that I have the ability to do so. To be able to take a yoga class and to have an hour to do something for myself, to have the means to do so, I am thankful," Starr said.

Starr said there are many paths into yoga and meditation, and you can start small. She recommends online videos for those nervous to take a class right away, such as YogaGlo, or meditation apps such as Insight Timer and Buddhify.

"The simplest way I find to bring more gratitude in one's life is to remind yourself how lucky and thankful you are. Repeat a simple mantra when you wake up or every time you look in the mirror. It can be as simple as 'Life is good.' In life, we get back what we give out. Practice gratitude and you will receive gratitude from the world around you."

Gina Uricchio, a Rocky Hill resident who teaches at Live Right Wellness in Old Wethersfield, has been practicing for more than 15 years.

"It's a daily essential piece of my day that incorporates movement and meditation," she said. "My practice keeps me grounded and able to trust my journey in this world and that all is unfolding as it should. Practicing gratitude every day naturally changes your vibration and moods instantly. Just saying thank you is enough."

It's not that she doesn't have her challenges. She even found a way to do yoga in bed while recovering following a mastectomy.

"If I can say thank you, even if it's for the cup of coffee I'm drinking, it immediately changes my vibration. With my yoga practice I can easily bring my nervous system to a state of balance, which in turn helps me manage my emotions," she said.

Lisa Romano, who opened Glastonbury Barre and Yoga in April 2016, has only been practicing yoga for a few years. "It was a transformative experience that went beyond the physical," she said.

Yoga helps her count her blessings, which can set the tone for the day. She said that this is especially important when life is not ideal.

"For people who are going through difficult times, being able to take an hour for themselves to notice their breath and their body, this might be the only time of the day to practice self-care. People often have a difficult time taking time for themselves, and dedicating an hour on the schedule to yoga solves that. Oftentimes, the practice of yoga is combined with journaling, visualization and meditation," Romano said. "For me, personally, yoga has taught me that in any stressful situation, my breath is vital to staying in control. … We are all going to experience traveling hassles, traffic, or bad news. Deep breathing and stretching instantly calm you down. And for that life lesson, I am grateful." **GL**

Learn more at bikramct.com, bikramyogasimsbury.com, glastonbury-barreandyoga.com, myliverightwellness.com and starrlifestudios.com.

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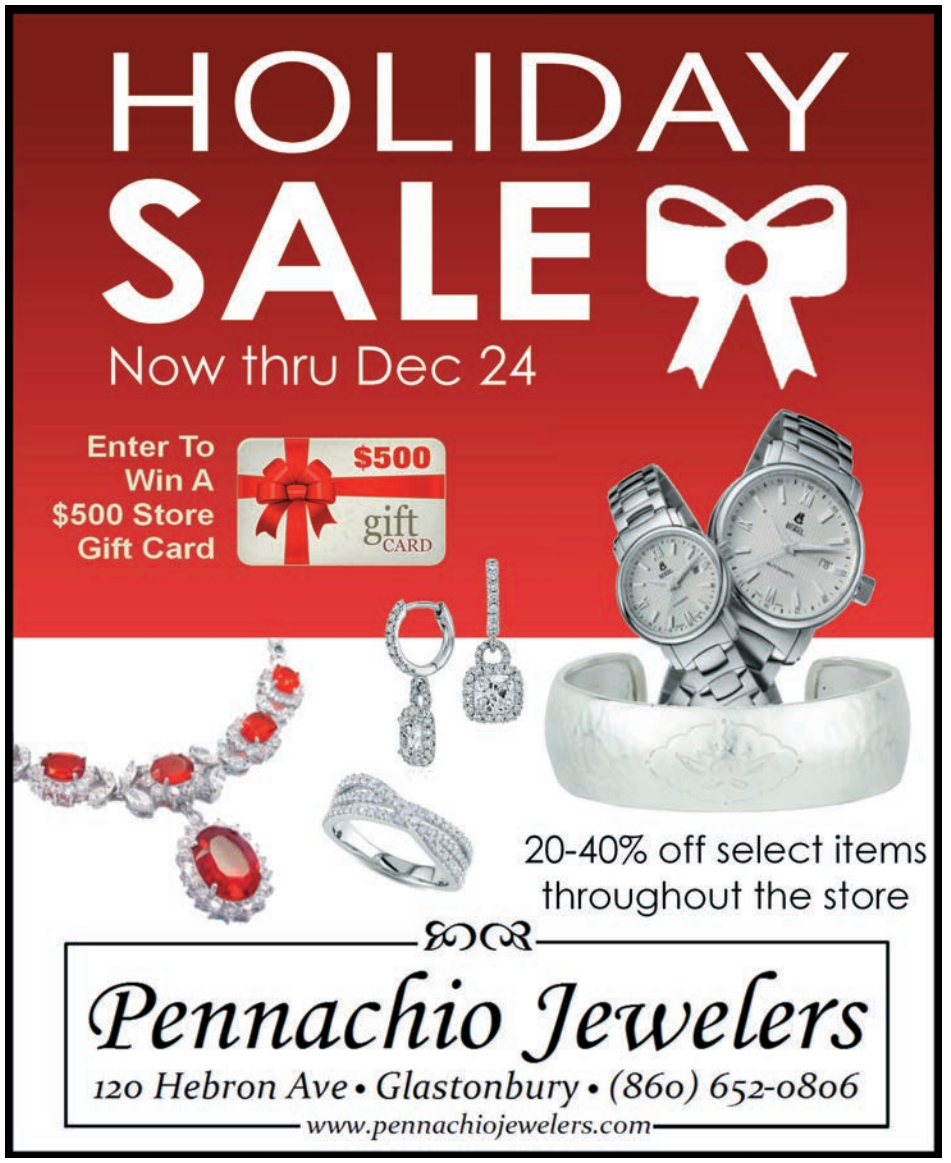
Raising *grateful children* this season and all year long

by Alicia B. Smith
LIFE Staff

The holiday time rings in a number of lovely, fun and exciting events and traditions, from decorating, baking and family visits, to religious observances and anticipation.

There is an underside to all of this good cheer, for along with all of the holiday hoopla this time of year can put an emphasis on one's sense of entitlement, and the "I want" and "give me" yearnings can be overwhelming, especially for children who are looking forward to a visit from Santa Claus or to see what may arrive for Hanukah.

Instilling a sense of gratitude in children is possible and should be a year-round endeavor. One of the ways to counter this seemingly me-only attitude is action. Getting children involved in activities and events outside of their circle and daily life helps them to learn that not everyone is as fortunate as they may be and, by working to improve the lives of others, they can learn to be grateful for



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what they have.

Students at Morley School in West Hartford participate in two annual events that help to foster a sense of community. In the fall, the entire school works to collect non-perishable food items for their Red Wagon Food Drive, a tradition that goes back more than 20 years. Just before Thanksgiving, students and staff wheel several red wagons full of items that have been collected and deliver them to the local food bank. In the spring, for the past 10 years, another parade of goods takes place, the Backpack Brigade. This time, students and staff collect new backpacks and school supplies, and once again deliver them to the town in order for them to be distributed to students in need over the summer months.

Since arriving as principal six years ago, Ryan Cleary has seen a third charitable effort begin. For the last year and a half, the school has developed a relationship with a sister school in Haiti.

"That idea was born out of an effort to have an authentic cultural experience," Cleary said.

The focus, initially, was to collect art supplies for students in Haiti and has broadened to assist in other ways as well.

"The reason we do all of those things is we have kids and families here with a tremendous amount of talent and a tremendous amount of compassion for the people around them," Cleary said. "We want them, when they leave Morley, to use their talents to be active and engaged in the community."

With the Haiti program, which includes Kindergartners through second graders, Cleary said he has seen students recognizing the differences between their school and the one they are partnering with.

"It certainly raised awareness of the situation and at the same time it created a sense of gratitude for the things we have."

While these three programs were developed at the school, Cleary said they have inspired students to do other things on their own to help make the world better. Some students have organized a fundraiser to raise money for cancer, and even the student council developed events.

The work the students have done has spread outside of the school, too, and Cleary said, during the distribution events of food and backpacks, there might be 150 students delivering the items and about 100 parents helping.

"That's the power of community," he said. "Its fantastic to see families engaged in this work right alongside their kids. What great modeling it is for the children, to see parents involved."

For many families the season's focus is on their faith, which can be an enormous source of inspiration and help to put life in perspective.

The Rev. Linda Spiers at Trinity Episcopal Church in Collinsville said for many Christians, Advent, the time leading up to the arrival of Christ on Christmas, is a period of slowing things down.

"It's totally opposite of what the secular world tells us to do. It's fast pace, people are decorating their homes. It's frenetic. The season of Advent is meant to slow us down, to help us think about the real meaning of the season."

Throughout the season, the church has events planned to help children and adults do more thinking. Parishioners of all ages will be asked to write down on a slip of paper what the "deep yearnings of their heart would be," and place the paper in an empty manger, which will be brought forth in the offering during the service as a way to give thanks for all they have in their lives.

The church also will provide blank Christmas cards for children to draw on or write a note, which will be later sent out to those who are homebound.

The church also collects new socks to be distributed to Christ Church Cathedral in Hartford for its Church Street Eats program, which provides meals and clothing to the homeless.

"All of those things are giving children an opportunity and adults to really seriously think about the season of Advent versus what I want for Christmas," Spiers said. "They are thinking outside of themselves."

While the holiday season often inspires people to do good deeds, the needs are year-round, and Spiers encourages families to think of ways to help their children understand they can help at any time. **GL**

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Finding the light in tough times

How to be grateful when all is not great

by Lynn Woike
LIFE Staff

It's easy to be grateful when you're in love, when you just got a big bonus, when you're healthy, when there's food on the table and when there's a new car parked in your driveway. Gratitude is not so easy when you are alone and in pain, when the cupboards are bare, when the vehicle that gets you to work needs repairs totaling two months rent and when the world seems to be crumbling.

Patricia Barone, co-founder of the West Hartford Counseling Center, has been working with adults who are struggling with life transitions, anxiety, depression, health-related issues, grief, loss and relational difficulties since 1984.

"In the short run, it may seem that what we want is what we need in order to feel more happiness and inner peace, but actually it may be just the opposite," she said. "Research supports the premise that gratitude for what we already have helps us to feel greater inner peace and happiness. The science of gratitude suggests that happiness is not a destination or a possession; you cannot wear it or consume it. Expressing thanks and giving gratitude in the present moment for what is is what leads to greater contentment and inner peace.

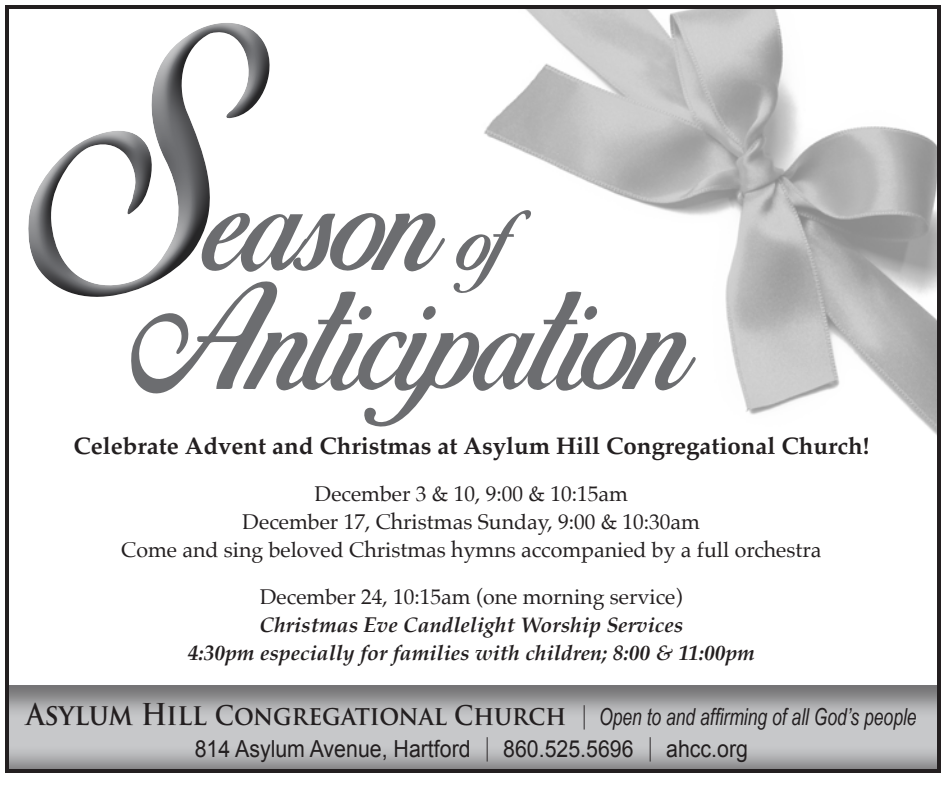
"An article in the New York Times suggested that, whether or not we feel grateful, we can intentionally choose to practice gratitude and by doing that, we will raise our happiness level."

Barone suggests finding three things a day for which you feel or you can imagine feeling gratitude.

"For example, it might be a clerk's smile or a snowstorm that keeps you home from work, or the way your dog greets you. It can be as subtle as the feel of a cool breeze on a hot day, or how cozy fleece feels on your skin on a cold day," she said.

With time, "the transformative power of gratitude" will bring a sense of peace, softening the harshness of life's struggles.

Founder of Copper Beech Institute and Associate Director at Holy Family Passionist Retreat Center Brandon Nappi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said, "I believe that as long as we are alive, there is more right with us than is wrong with us."

By focusing on how hopelessly broken life seems, fear is stoked and "there is a temptation to catastrophize our lives … leaving us feeling overwhelmed and paralyzed."

Bringing an alternate energy source to our challenges is helpful, he said, explaining, "Gratitude is a limitless source of energy when we feel overwhelmed by the struggles of our lives or the world. Gratitude can be a powerful resource to free ourselves from the trap of cynicism and despair. Ask yourself, 'What's right with this moment?' There's always an answer, no matter how dire the situation. The practice of gratitude immediately activates our present moment awareness. We wake up to the blessing of what has been there all along, though we may not have noticed it. It might be the presence of a friend, the smell of fallen leaves, or the familiar melody of a favorite song. Using the energy of gratitude, we can begin to bring appreciation to our lives and realize that there is actually much to be grateful for in every moment no matter what."

A mindfulness teacher, he wrote, "Somehow the gray November horizon and the crunch of leaves underfoot inspire me to be mindful of the countless gifts I've received in my life. I have enough to eat. My persistent flaws aren't often embarrassingly visible. I have enough documentaries on my smart TV to fill two lifetimes. My tween children mostly like me," in an article for Huffpost's The Blog last November titled "Platitude of Gratitude: The Shadow Side of Being Thankful."

Gratitude – as it is practiced by the great spiritual traditions – reveals connection.

"The art of being thankful connects us to those who have given us gifts while inspiring us to be gift-givers in the world. The truth is that our well-being and the well-being of others are connected. Everything and everyone is connected to everything and everyone else," Nappi said.

Experiencing that connectedness is one of the things that helped Eve Schreiber get through the worst times of her life.

"Life was a blur, hazy. I had a lot of different jobs because I couldn't keep one. I was raised by a single working mother, so I felt I had to live up to her independence," Schreiber said.

One morning, she showed up for work with a four-inch knife gash on her upper thigh, having no memory of it after drinking and blacking out the night before. A friend in recovery took her to rehab and she stayed.

"Attending [Narcotics Anonymous] meetings and participating in the fellowship gave me a sense of belonging. The camaraderie, the support and getting to know myself better through step work has given me a different set of eyes on myself. I got a better understanding of why I did the things I did when I used drugs," she said.

Before that self-reflection, she didn't much like life and saw nothing for which to be grateful.

"I was self-destructive. I was being reckless. I made a lot of mistakes, and I ended serving time in jail for drinking. There you're told when to eat and when to sleep, when you're allowed to make a phone call" Schreiber said.

While in jail, she practiced gratitude. She was grateful for everything – from simple gestures of kindness, to the strength and friendship of other recovering addicts.

"When I got out, it was like a sense of privilege. I was waking up in the morning and not being told when to wake up. Driving is a privilege. Being able to use the phone and not take it for granted," she said. "I'm grateful for a second chance. It's like a do-over."

Eighteen years have passed and she still counts every blessing. Although she's recovering from surgery, is unable to work and therefore has no income, she is grateful.

"It could be worse. I could have died," she said. "I'm grateful for sunrise and sunset, waking up in my own bed. I can walk on two legs. I can use two arms. I have the gifts of sight, smell, hearing. I have a sense of gratitude. My life really isn't that bad." GL

by Olivia Piper
LIFE Staff

Is being grateful good for you?

Showing gratitude.

It may seem like a simple concept, and one that is often mentioned during the holiday season. Though we are often told that we should be grateful, how does it help us? Is being grateful good for you?

If you ask Dr. Diane Hayden, an experienced health and wellness professional and the owner and publisher of Natural Nutmeg Magazine, she will tell you exactly how being grateful is beneficial for both your physical and mental health.

"There is a special kind of magic in gratitude. It raises our consciousness, boosts our energy and enhances our self-worth," Hayden said of the mental benefits of being more grateful in everyday life.

Additionally, there are actual physical benefits to gratefulness, as people who are grateful are more likely to take care of their health and, according to Dr. Hayden, experience the physical benefits of improved sleep quality and being better connected with one's body.

"Think of how you feel when you are grateful for something and when you say 'Thank you' for something. What are the actual physical feelings you have in your body? If we can become more in tune to these feelings, we can stay in a more grateful and positive state, and it also helps you to notice when you aren't feeling well," Hayden said.

In addition to bolstering one's confidence or sleep schedule, being grateful every day is similar to any type of habit in that it will begin to impact different areas of one's life.

"Practicing gratitude is a fundamental component of the law of attraction and learning how to manifest and create your ideal life. The theory is that, in order to bring what you want into your life, you have to be grateful for what you already have and you have to give thanks for what you receive in the future. This enables a constant flow of positive energy to go into and out of your life. If you are not thankful for what you receive, it will block the flow and you will have a difficult time attracting what you want," Hayden said.

As for how to practice gratitude, one does not have to wait for a gift-giving holiday or birthday, but can instead begin to notice and note the small moments in each day that bring joy and thankfulness. **GL**

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STUDENT of the Month

Local teen honors her father, raises thousands

Annual carnival benefits ALS research

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

Shannon Kiniry

Shannon Kiniry is an honors student at Glastonbury High School, a peer educator and a leader of a group that shows younger students around the school. She has played three sports and loves her dog, a chocolate lab named Kona. She's on the leadership team at St. Dunstan's Church, where she has participated in mission trips, and she has worked as a camp counselor and helps with after-school care at Nayaug Elementary School.

As if all that weren't enough to keep her busy, over the past eight years, Shannon has organized a carnival and raised tens of thousands of dollars for the Connecticut chapter of the ALS Association, which raises money to help people with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, commonly known as Lou Gehrig's Disease.

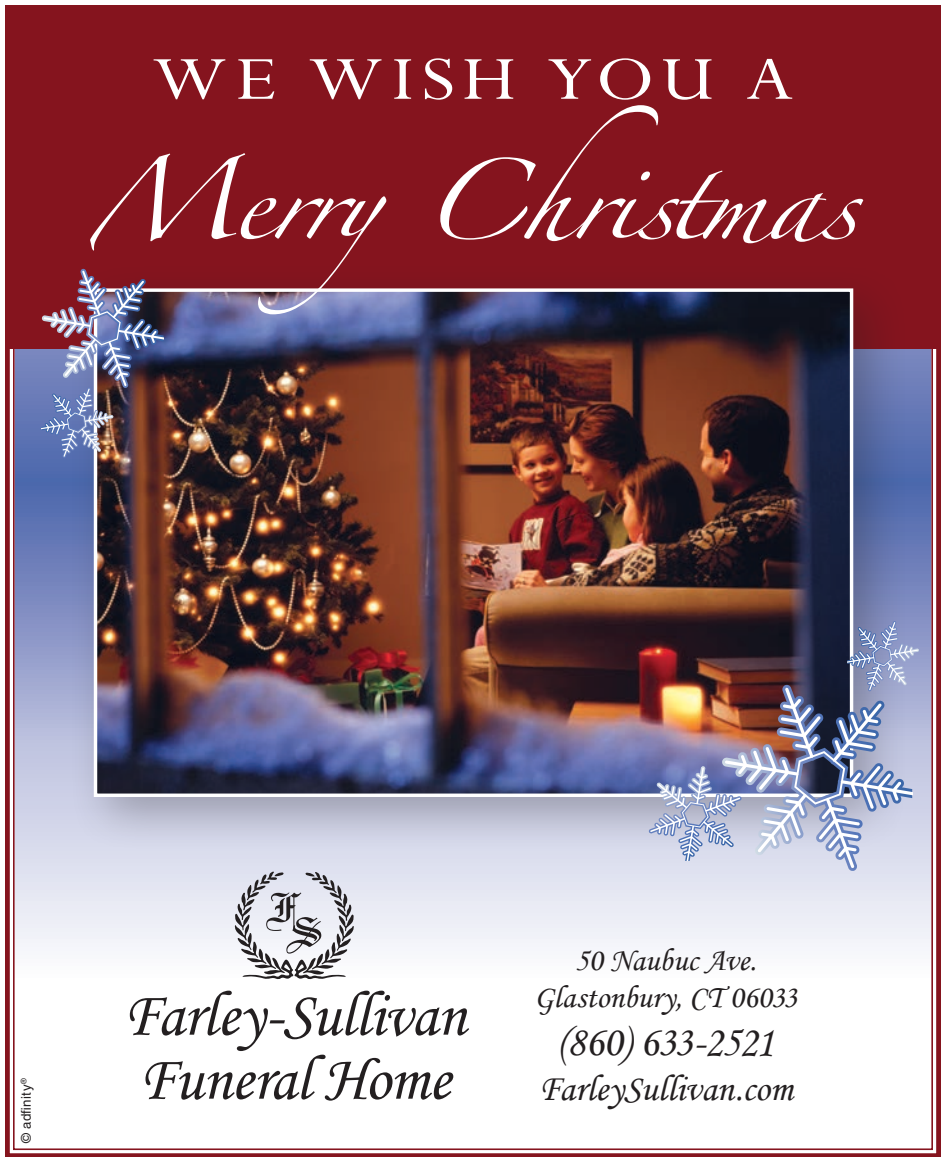
For Shannon, it's personal. Her father, Chris, was diagnosed with the progressive disease two years before she was born.

"She truly is a special person and an honor to know and work with," said Jacky Rose, development manager for the Connecticut chapter of the ALS Association. "Shannon is mature beyond her years, but still a kid at heart. She spends her summers like most teenagers- working, travelling, and attending sports camp. Somewhere in between all of her extracurricular activities she has the time to put together the ALS carnival as a way to honor her dad and a way to help the ALS community. Her event has grown every year and continues to impress me- she reaches more and more attendees and raises more funds to help people living with ALS in our state."

The carnival started out as a small event with neighbors eight years ago.

"I was sitting at my computer at the end of the summer," she said. "There were lots of parties, and I wanted to have a luau in our backyard." Her neighbor, Julia Boll, helped with planning. At some point one of them had the idea of doing it as a fundraiser for the ALS Society.

"When the idea for the ALS carnival came about, I remember spending so much time at her house looking through catalogs for prizes and trying to figure out where we could get a



cotton candy machine and a bounce house," Julia said. "We were so young then and trying to do what we could at our age. Shannon has definitely grown as the event has. It has been so successful and, although I was not around to help out for the carnival this year, I know she is and will always be instrumental in the success of the event. She set goals for how much money she wanted to raise and, when she puts her mind to something, she is truly unstoppable. In addition, she has always been mature for her age and, even though we are three years apart, it really has not affected our friendship because of the way she carries herself. Shannon has an amazing attitude and I admire how she goes through life like she doesn't have any worries when I know things must be hard at times. She really is a wonderful person with a desire to create positive change."

They ended up with 50 children, a moon bounce and home-made carnival games. "We sort of crafted it together," she said. The moon bounce was THE attraction. We raised $750 and said 'Wow! That was cool!' We were completely winging it."

Shannon said that the first year, the kids all knew that the carnival's focus was a disease but were unclear about the details. "They knew they were there because Shannon's dad's muscles don't work," she said.

That has impressed the ALS Association's Rose. "Every kid knows why he or she is there. They know they are raising funds for ALS," she said.

The carnival continued to grow, and for its fifth year they moved it to the clubhouse grounds at Minnechaug Golf Course. As the event expanded, Shannon picked up support from several businesses, including Highland Park Market, which continues to help and Farmington Bank, where her mother works. "They're all so generous," she said.

Three years ago the carnival raised $10,000 through the ALS Association's ice bucket challenge. High school athletes, including the football team and the girls' basketball and soccer teams, as well as some middle school students, helped in a variety of ways. Kevin Nathan, a Glastonbury resident and sports anchor at NBC30, covered the event. Adult friends and neighbors take the day off to help, one of her mother's friends cooks the hot dogs, and local businesses contribute prizes for a drawing. "Over the years it's been so heart-warming," Shannon's mother, Maureen, said. "We're proud of her. People see what she and her friends have done."

At school, Shannon has impressed staff and faculty members with her accomplishments and her attitude.

"I have known Shannon for three years as a member of our peer education group," said Jane Hogan, an outreach social worker at the high school. "Peer educators serve as peer helpers to other students at Glastonbury High School. Shannon was chosen for this group because of her ability to understand the issues that students face and her desire to do something to help. Shannon truly cares about people and continues to support them in a positive way. Shannon is a kind, thoughtful, and trustworthy person who always greets you with a smile. Shannon Kiniry is the type of individual that makes you want to be a better person. Her compassion for others and her perspective on life is refreshing."

"As a peer educator, I've seen her serve as a role model to our younger students and share her knowledge and experience on issues that impact their lives," said Thomas Neagle, one of the high school's assistant principals. "Last year I nominated Shannon for the Connecticut Certificate of Recognition from Secretary of State Denise Merrill. In that nomination I highlighted that fact that Shannon is an honors student and a three-sport athlete who organizes an annual campaign to raise awareness of ALS and funds that support ongoing research for a cure. This past year, Shannon's campaign raised over $14,000!"

Neagle said he is impressed as much by Shannon's character as by her accomplishments. "When you see Shannon, even for a brief moment, your day is changed. Her smile is infectious; her joy becomes your joy. Simply put, Shannon makes other peoples' lives better by what she does and by who she is."

It's likely that next year's carnival will be the last, since Shannon will be entering her senior year at GHS before heading to college, where she plans to study communications or journalism.

"We're thinking of going all-out and extending the hours," she said with a smile. GL

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Business Notes

William Taylor has joined **Conscious Capital Wealth Management**, a local investment advisory firm, as a whole wealth advisor and the team's physical health coach. He is a graduate of Springfield College and a former basketball player there and at the University of Connecticut. Taylor has had a 20-year career in fitness and information technology.

Smith Brothers Insurance has hired Nicole A. Miner as an employee benefits account executive. The Glastonbury-based company has offices throughout Connecticut and in Massachusetts and New Jersey.

Nancy Avery has joined the **Finer Team at William Raveis Real Estate**. She has 25 years of experience in real estate, specializing in new construction, residential and investment properties.

The Wireless Zone, the nation's largest wireless retail franchise and exclusive provider of Verizon Wireless products and services, has opened at 2450 Main Street. Franchise owners Neil Ryan and Scott Gladstone hope to help local charities through the Wireless Zone Foundation for Giving. Anyone who thinks the foundation might be able to help may call managing partner Nate Joslin at 860-262-9999. GL

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Your thoughts:

While being grateful should be a year-round endeavor, there's something about the end of the year – and a holiday with "thanks" in its name – that tends to make us extra-reflective about the good things in our lives. Glastonbury LIFE wanted to know what its readers are most grateful for this year. Here's some of what you said:

Mara Dresner photos

"I'm grateful for being in good health. And, I'm grateful for living here at Willow Green; I love it here."
–Agnes Murch

"Friends and family. My son is getting married next year and the coming together of the two families. We have really merged into one family."
–Jan Horahan

"Becoming an aunt for the first time to my beautiful niece, Beatrice."
–Katie O'Neil

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From Shanghai to Glastonbury

Joe Pan wants to help create healthier lives, one manicure at a time

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

After Joe Pan graduated from college, he was working for an advertising company in Shanghai, where he grew up. While he worked on diverse projects such as testing McDonald's menu for a Chinese audience and gauging consumer reaction to a new series from BMW, he found that the work wasn't what he wanted to be doing.

Six years ago, when he was 24, he decided to come to the United States and moved to New York City.

"I want to open my eyes. I want to see the world, to have adventure. That's what brings me to USA," Pan said. "I came here by myself. It was a big adventure for me. Actually it was fun. Everything to me was new. I spent a day just taking different subways in New York City! I still remember the whole system shocked me. I feel lost in subway, which was in a good way."

At first, his parents helped support him.

"The [first] job I get was I went to restaurant doing waiter, which is fun. You have to live, you have to make some money," Pan, now 30, said.

He knew he didn't want to go into the restaurant field, however. When he was in Shanghai, he had learned how to do hair and make-up, and decided that he wanted to work in a nail salon.

"I realized if you want to do this job in New York, you have to get licenses, so I went to school just for the licenses," he said. "It took me about almost a year to get the license."

During that time he began to practice his craft.

"That's how I start doing nails. Then I feel l love doing nails. It's fun. When I'm doing different customers, I hear different stories. Customers have their personalities; they like different styles, so it's good for me. I can do crazy design for me. It's really close to fashion, it's all I like."

Pan moved to Connecticut and started working in a Glastonbury salon in 2013.

"I like this town; I think people are nice. I [had] lived in the city all the time. This is more like countryside. It was attractive to me," he said.

While he was enjoying the work, he starting thinking more about the products he was using.

"After working a couple years,

Photo by Mara Dresner

Joe Pan has opened YOJI Nails & Spa on Hebron Avenue. He wants to help people live a healthier life beyond just manicures and pedicuress

I realize the first thing to myself since I'm the person using the products all day long. Can I find something that is healthier, better for myself? And then I thought, it was a good idea for customers. Nowadays people care about their health but also care about beauty. Can I do some connection between beauty and healthy? If [I was] working for someone else, it [would be] hard to make other people do a big change, so I decided create a store for myself and also for my customers," Pan explained.

Out of that desire, YOJI Nails & Spa on Hebron Avenue was born. Yoji is a Mandarin word that means "organic."

Pan first starting thinking about the project and researching product lines, including nail polishes, massage oils and scrubs, in 2015. It took more than a year to renovate the space after he found it in March 2016.

"It took a lot of time to build out," he said. "We had to create a new air return system. It's not just a vent. It takes the old air out. At the same time, you bring the fresh air in."

"It's a very well set up, welcoming place," Nancy Lepore of Glastonbury said. "Before he opened,

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"What I want to bring to the people is that attitude, to create a healthier lifestyle, not only the beauty, but also your lifestyle should be healthier."

–Joe Pan

he used to come to our house and do our nails. It was very relaxing. We've established a friendship between us."

Her daughter-in-law, Karen Lepore, is also a fan.

"Joe is very personable. He does [your nails] exactly the way you like it. Some people like them square; some people like them round; he does what you like," she said.

She's been especially impressed with a new product that has helped keep her manicure chip-free for three weeks.

"I've followed him wherever he went. He does such a great job," she said. "The new place is so beautiful. He has wonderful taste. When I first walked in, I thought, 'Am I on Rodeo Drive?' It just looked so fancy. I just think it's a really nice place. You can go there; you can relax; you can enjoy. He makes you feel at home."

In addition to manicures and pedicures, the salon offers massages and waxing.

The 250 shades of polish he features from companies such as Zoya are free of the 10 most toxic chemicals found in regular nail polish. The lotions, creams, oils and scrubs are also natural and do not contain petrochemicals, parabens or sulfates.

Pan believes that living naturally goes beyond the products he chooses.

"I think organic is an attitude. It's a lifestyle. What I want to bring to the people is that attitude, to create a healthier lifestyle, not only the beauty, but also your lifestyle should be healthier; you should work out, nails, hair products, skin care, everything should be healthier," he said.

For his grand opening in August, he partnered with Designed Training and offered a free barre class in his salon. He's talking with other businesses, such as yoga and Pilates practitioners, about holding events at his salon.

"No one thought you could have a barre class in a nail salon," he said. "I want to just give a harmoniously healthy [salon]. I want to let people relax and enjoy. Yes, a nail salon is a nail salon, but we can create a healthier life." **GL**

YOJI Nails & Spa is at 1005B Hebron Avenue. Learn more by calling 860-430-1855 or visiting yojinails.com.

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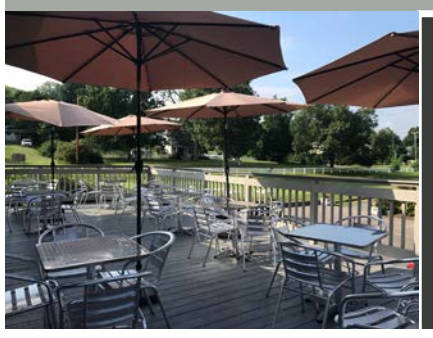

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People Notes

Raymond Pineault, a Glastonbury resident and president and general manager of Mohegun Sun, has received the 2017 "Bring It Home" award from the Connecticut Convention and Sports Bureau for his work bringing the Barrett-Jackson Auction to Mohegan Sun in June.

Courtesy photo

Courtney Jinjika has been promoted to senior vice president and regional retail leader at KeyBank's Connecticut and Western Massachusetts offices. Jinjika has an associate's degree in business from Highline College and a graduate certificate in banking and financial support services from Pacific Coast Banking School. She has served as treasurer and alumni board member of the Highline College Foundation, chair and volunteer of Junior Achievement, and has been a March of Dimes participant for the past 16 years. She and her family live in Glastonbury.

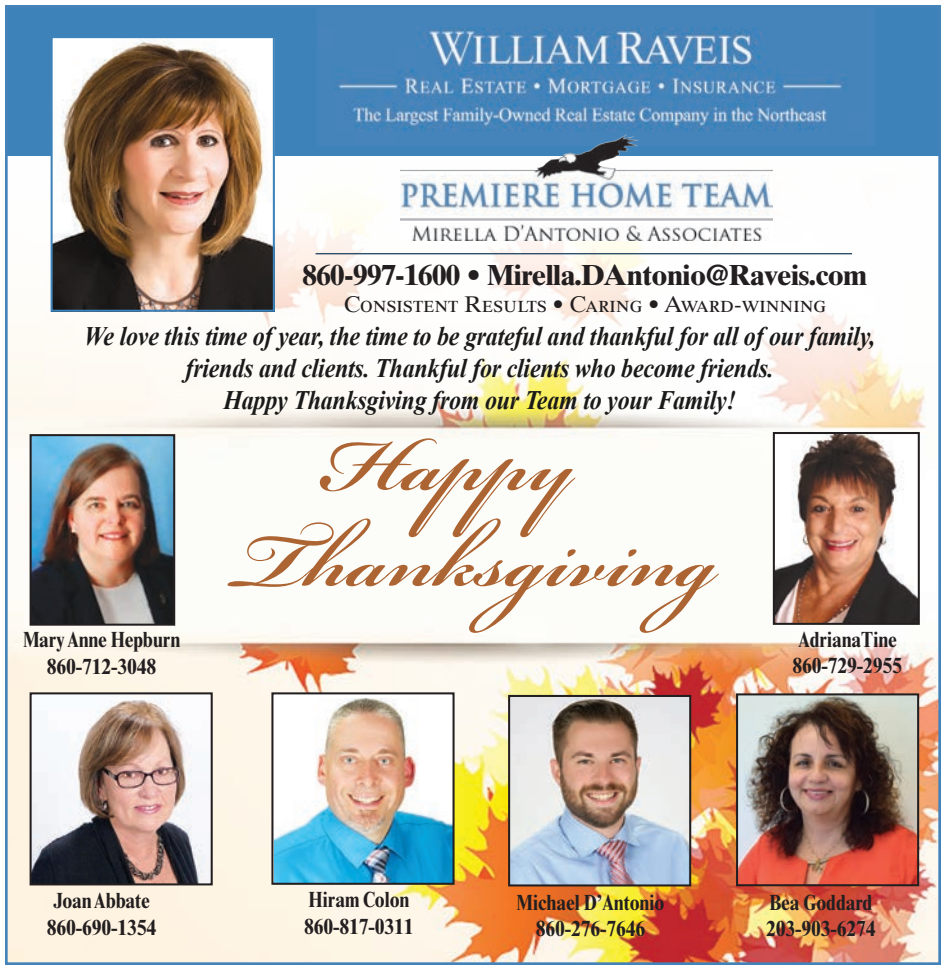
Kristen Masood and **Daniel Sidebottom** were married in Middletown in August. Masood is the daughter of Ann and Jim Masood of Fredonia, NY, and Sidebottom is the son of Kay Sidebottom and Stephen and Deb Sidebottom of Rotherham, England. She is a graduate of the University of Saint Joseph, has a doctorate in pharmacy and is employed by CVS Pharmacy. He has a degree in sports and exercise science from the University of Lincoln and works for the Glastonbury Hartwell Soccer Club.

The couple visited the Hawaiian Islands on their honeymoon in Hawaii and lives in town.

Adam Tortorello's White Rabbit Theatre will present Thoroughly Modern Millie December 1, 2, 8 and 9 at 7 p.m. and December 3 at 3 p.m. at Trinity-on-Main in New Britain. Glastonbury residents Christiana Haff and Jeff Snyder are playing the lead roles of Millie and Trevor Graydon, and several other residents are in the cast.

To learn more, visit trinityonmain.ticketleap.com/thoroughly-modern-millie/ dates or email Tortorello at adam.tortorello@gmail.com. **GL**

Photo by Carrie Draghi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Students see politics at its best

by Sean Humphries
Glastonbury High School writer

In late October, several of the local election town council and board of education candidates visited Glastonbury High School. Throughout a series of three days, candidate groups met with members of the Class of 2018. They discussed their own views of town issues, why they should be kept in or put into position, and answered any questions from the students that they might have had.

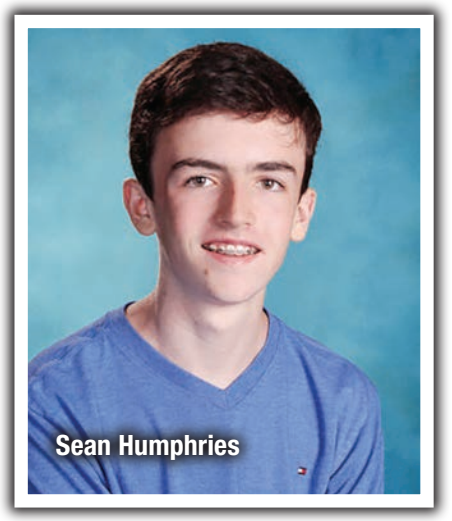
Even after Election Day the presentation still stands out in particular because it not only introduced who the candidates were, but also fairly demonstrated an even balance in illustrating the viewpoints of both political parties and what the town council and board of education, as a whole, believed in to the student body.

When introducing the candidates, the teacher of Current Issues gave their individual name, if they were challenger or incumbent (elected officials currently holding position) and said if they were Democrat or Republican. What was especially interesting, though, is that throughout each presentation, both political parties were evenly divided into a set of board of education Republicans and Democrats on the first day, another group of town council Democrats on the second day, and a parallel number of Republicans on the third day.

By allowing a balanced amount for each political party, no voices were unheard and a clear message was sent that an unbiased representation of what the town council and board of education stood for mattered more than a party's own political agenda.

From what can be seen in today's politics, with unending conflict between both sides, it was refreshing to finally see a presentation where all points on the political spectrum could be discussed and a showcase of the matter of fact in both opposing sides working together for the good of the Glastonbury citizen. In my own perspective, this kind of discussion is exactly what the average student preparing to vote needs for better political understanding.

Even if students did not get to vote, they were still given enough information to understand what the town council and board of education are for. Although specific individuals may not be remembered in years to come, the stage meeting really helped students understand what their goals are and how each member plays a different role in trying to achieve them. Hearing from each candidate helped students form a solid foundation of the local politics of the town and even encouraged them to become involved, which is particularly important, especially when taking a modern issues centered course.


Sean Humphries

Whether students of Glastonbury High School will be involved in politics or even life in the town in the future, one of the most important things they can take away from what has been taught to them is that politics must be represented from all sides to get the big picture in any issue. Fortunately, I believe these discussions with the board of education and town council have shown them just that.

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Construction is 'kind of in his blood'

Corey Turner's home improvement company celebrates 10 years

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

There was never much doubt about what Corey Turner would do when he grew up. The only question was when it would happen.

Turner, the grandson of Donald Turner, who started the family construction business more than 70 years ago, said he learned to climb a ladder and go up on a roof as a young child.

"I always liked construction," he said. "It was kind of in my blood. I spent a lot of time on job sites with my dad, and I worked weekends in a cabinet shop. All throughout, I anticipated becoming part of the company."

Donald Turner and his seven sons provided roofing, siding, and storm window and door services in central Connecticut for several years as Turner & Sons. By the late 1960s, Donald Turner's sons, including Corey father, Robert, were taking more active leadership roles in the company, which continued to expand. In 1978 the company was split into four companies, each run by one of Donald's sons and each focusing on a specific geographic area. In 1990 Corey's father founded the Robert Turner Company here and expanded the business to include general carpentry and deck and porch enclosures.

Corey, who grew up in Glastonbury, headed to the University of Colorado in 1999 to study environmental design. He planned to return to town and to the family's company after graduating, but when his father had a heart attack after his junior year he returned home to run the business, then known as the Robert Turner Company, for the summer while his father recovered from quadruple bypass surgery. He returned to college that fall, knowing he would take the company over after a transition period.

The company became Corey Turner Home Improvement Contractors, LLC, in 2007. His father is semi-retired but continues to help out.

"I took over just in time for the recession," he said with a laugh.

These days, the company does "pretty much everything," Corey said.

Under his leadership, the business played an integral role in the construction of a home for Manny Jimenez, a Marine veteran who lost an arm and part of his sight and hearing while serving in Afghanistan.

The company donated windows, siding and roofing for the home, and all employees donated a day of work on the project. Over all, the local Rotary Club had so many people to donating labor and materials that they turned over the additional cash donations to Purple Heart Homes, which sponsored the local project, to be used for a home for a disabled veteran in Middletown.

"That was a great project," Corey, who was a member of the local Rotary Club at the time the house was built and is now its vice-president, said. The company also helped with the construction of the pavilion at Riverfront Park, another Rotary project.

Over the years, Corey's company and those of his father and uncles have earned accolades from many customers.

"They do it all," said Toni Golec, who has been doing business with Corey and his family for 20 years. "They have worked on my former home and just spent six months fixing my new home, which was a real fixer-upper. They worked on every inch both inside and out. I lived here while they

remodeled everything. They and their crew worked around me and were great to deal with ... In an age where there are so many con men looking to take advantage of people, it is refreshing to have people who do quality work and who stand by their work years after it has been completed. They are my 'go-to' guys."

Patricia Lynch has used Corey's company twice in the past eight years.

"My first project with Corey and his team was to replace my deck which was two stories high and it needed to be enlarged along with a new staircase to the ground," she said. "I was extremely pleased with the new deck. In 2016, I contacted Corey again as I wanted to add a four-season's room and a screened in porch. Together we worked on the plan and Corey engaged an architect to assist us with the plan. I am so happy with the outcome of these projects. Corey is a delight to work with and I am impressed with his organization of these projects and his team of crafters."

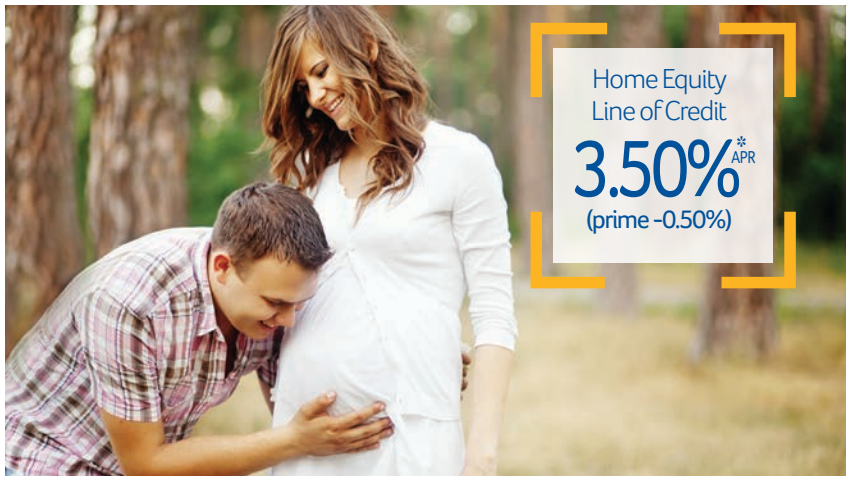
And Joe Oberheuser, who has known Corey personally and professionally and has used him for several projects in his home, said he is impressed by the company's customer service, attention to detail and cleanliness.

Corey Turner grew up in his family's home improvement business. After earning a degree in environmental design, he took the company over from his father and renamed it 10 years ago.

Nancy Thompson photo

"Corey always strives to ensure that the final result of a project matches his customer's expectations. He visits each job site every day to assist his team, check their work and answer any questions the homeowner may have. In addition, both he and his workers pay close attention to the small details that make a big difference in the overall quality of the work. They'll take time to adjust or redo little things that many people wouldn't even notice weren't perfect. Lastly, cleanliness. Construction and remodeling work is always going to be messy but Corey and his team always spend a few minutes at the end of each day tidying up after themselves, leaving the work area as neat and clean as possible. Corey and his family are Glastonbury natives who are very active and vested in the town. Most people probably know his company from their exterior work – siding, roofing, decks and replacement windows – but they also do wonderful interior remodeling and renovation work."

Corey and his wife, Kelly, have two daughters, Paige, 2, and Annabelle, 10 months and are expecting a third child in January. **GL**



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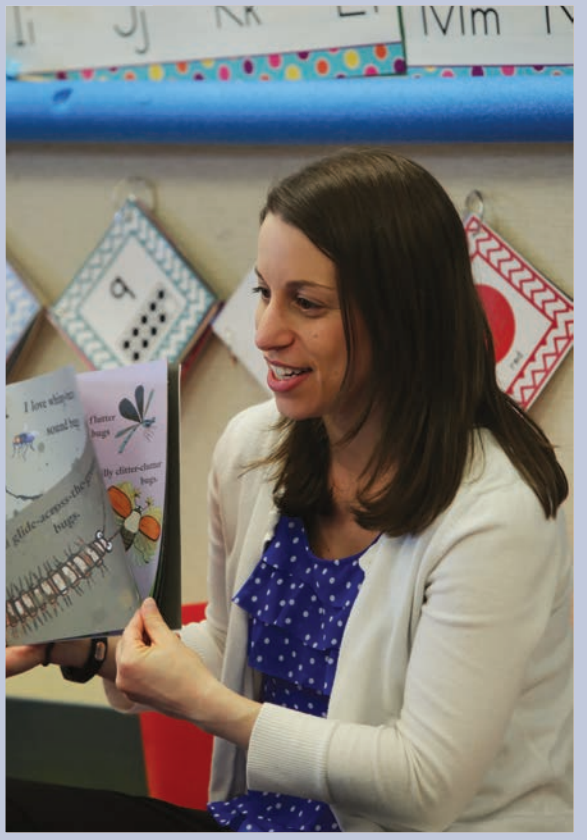
Molly Rathbun '12
Physical Education/Psychology
Four-time Division III All-American

Molly is the head softball coach and sports psychology coordinator at Muhlenberg College in Pennsylvania. "Being a student-athlete taught me about commitment and camaraderie, and showed me the importance of staying in the moment and focusing on the little things."



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‘Our help is a gift from Lily’

Melissa Albrecht’s organization helps pet owners

by Mara Dresner
Staff Writer

For many people a pet is more than just an animal; it’s truly part of the family. So when a pet becomes ill, it can be devastating when the cost of treatment is more than its owner can afford. That’s where With From Love for Lily comes in.

The organization works with veterinarians to provide funds for medical care, medicine and even prescription food when a pet has a treatable illness.

“We’ve paid for pets’ surgeries and prescriptions when their owners have been out of work due to their own illnesses, said Melissa Albrecht, founder of With Love From Lily. “We had a few special cases where we’ve also donated supplies for resident pets of group homes and a service animal that lost everything in a house fire.”

The organization is a way to carry on the joy that her dog Lily brought into her life.

“Lily was first dog I had ever adopted on my own,” Albrecht said. “She was the sweetest black Lab. Her parents were AKC agility champions, but when Lily was just a small puppy, the breeders knew she would never be a show dog. The breeders were friends of a friend and they were looking for someone to give her a ‘pet’ home. Lily was 10 weeks old when I brought her home. For a Lab, she was a calm, lazy puppy. Her favorite things were chewing, eating,

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Courtesy photo

Melissa Albrecht founded With Love From Lily after losing her beloved black Lab.

begging for food and swimming. She loved everyone and every animal she came in contact with. Lily was my shadow. In her eight short years, I never had to eat, sleep or go to the bathroom alone. Lily was the leader and matriarch to all the other fur babies in my home. Her passing left a big hole in our hearts."

Lily's death in December 2014 was unexpected and shocking. Her illness came on quickly. One night when Albrecht came home from work she let out Lily and her other dog, Maggie.

"Lily would immediately come in, knowing dinner was waiting, but one night she just sat in the yard. She seemed tired and winded. I immediately knew something was wrong. We spent the night in the emergency room. The doctors suspected the worst, but it would be about two weeks before we knew for sure Lily had cancer. One of her lungs was completely taken over. The surgeons were hopeful that removing her lung, would restore her back to herself, so of course I scheduled the surgery immediately. The surgery did not go well. She coded on the table. The doctor was able to bring her back, but she never woke up again. Lily fought so hard, but three days later she was gone. I was absolutely devastated," Albrecht said. "Lily was my baby. I would have given anything to make her better. I don't want to tell you how much I spent, but in the end, I probably could have had a new car. Fortunately, I had savings and pet insurance. Even knowing what I know now, I would have spent double if it would have brought her back. I realized how blessed I was. I was able to give Lily a chance. Too many people are not that fortunate. I needed to find a way to share my good fortune."

It was out of that experience that With Love From Lily was born.

"Our mission is to provide financial assistance, to the best of our ability, to save and improve the lives of animals when there is a positive prognosis. I wanted to help low-income families take care of their pets if they suddenly became ill and treatment was available. I especially want to provide that security to responsible pet owners who are elderly or those with a disability. I want to help those pet parents that are willing and physically able to provide necessary treatment, but may not be able to afford it. Lily gave our family so much. Our help is a gift from Lily, for those who love their pets," she said.

The group is not a rescue and does not pay for spaying, neutering or yearly checkups.

"We support responsible pet owners, that have spayed or neutered their pets, as well as provided them with regular medical care when their pets have an unforeseen illness or medical issue," Albrecht said. "In return for our gift, I encourage benefi-

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Lily, a Black Lab and top left photo, was the first dog that Melissa Albrecht adopted on her own. After she died unexpectedly, Albrecht founded With Love From Lily to help pet owners with medical expenses.

ciaries to give back in any way possible to others. Just about everyone has something they can do for others. Donate your time, old blankets and towels, cleaning supplies or pet food to a shelter or rescue. Help a neighbor. Say a prayer. It could be any act of kindness to another. In the end, it is a gift we are happy to give."

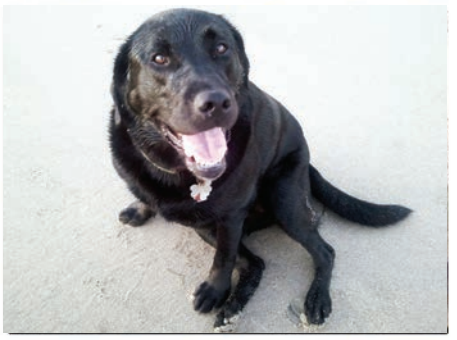
The program is funded in a variety of ways.

"Most of our money comes from payroll deductions of our supporters through United Way, Benevity Causes or similar organizations. We have many supporters that work for Disney and benefit from the company matches," Albrecht said. "With Love From Lily has several supporters that shop online through AmazonSmile and IGive. Both donate a portion of the sale, at no additional cost, to a charity of your choice. I think I have a contest going with a few others of who has the biggest Amazon addiction. I may be winning!"

The organization has also sold T-shirts and sweatshirts, some of which are for sale on the group's website.

"We have collection boxes at

With Love From Lily has helped a variety of pets with their medical needs.



Courtesy photos

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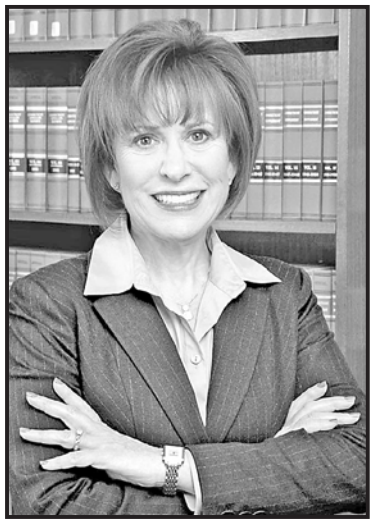

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"Pet companionship is so important, especially for senior citizens and people with disabilities, for overall health and wellbeing."

– Melissa Albrecht

Belltown Hill Orchards in South Glastonbury, where we also have handmade greeting cards, made by my sister, Michelle Albrecht, available for a donation," she said. "All of the administrative costs are paid personally by me. It's important that 100 percent of our donations are going where they are needed most. With Love From Lily is a small non-profit that has been able to great things with the generosity of our supporters. I can't express how grateful I am to those that have put their trust in me, and my team, to help others."

This past summer Jocelyn DeMaio, chief empowered officer of Empowered Indoor Cycling Studio in Glastonbury, held a fundraiser called Empowered with Purpose to raise money for the organization.

"I am impressed with the organization, With Love from Lily, and the impact it has to both animal and human lives. Too often low- and middle-income pet owners have to euthanize their animals because of prohibitive costs of veterinary care. Animals contribute so much to our lives and it is gut-wrenching to give up an animal for any reason, particularly due to monetary constraints. With Love from Lily allows people to keep their non-human family members," said DeMaio, who has known Melissa Albrecht for 15-years. "Melissa has a huge heart and has several pets that she loves like they are her kids. It was not surprising to me when I'd heard Melissa formed the non-profit several years go. Like Melissa, I am a big animal lover with two rescued dogs, one of whom recently required expensive ACL surgery and physical therapy. Fortunately, I was able to pay for this surgery but understand there are many situations where this isn't the case. I wanted to host a ride at Empowered Indoor Cycling Studio to bring awareness to With Love from Lily. The event called Empowered With Purpose was held on July 30 and raised $1,100 for With Love from Lily. Supporting local non-profits is very important to me. The chance for Glastonbury residents to learn about this local organization and for them to directly impact others in the community seemed like a win-win."

Albrecht also is a Reiki Master and the owner of Peaceful Souls Healing and Reiki in Glastonbury. For each animal Reiki session she does, she donates $10 of the session cost to With Love From Lily in a pet's honor. She will also donate a portion of your session if you mention With Love From Lily when you book or during your session.

"Several years ago, people suggested that I learn Reiki. I really didn't know what it was at the time and put it out of my mind. A year later, my cat Chloe was suffering from kidney stones. I was trying to find anything to ease her pain. She had passed stones before and hoped she would pass them again. I remembered Reiki and sought out someone that could help," Albrecht said. "The session was great and Chloe was so peaceful afterward. Unfortunately, Chloe was unable to pass the stones and didn't make it through the surgery to remove them. I had no doubt that the Reiki gave her peace and helped her in her passing. I was then determined to learn. Since then I became a Reiki Master. In addition to people, some of my clients have been cats, dogs and a horse named Emma."

Albrecht has three dogs and a cat, who are all rescues.

"Pet companionship is so important, especially for senior citizens and people with disabilities, for overall health and wellbeing. I also know how it feels to feel helpless when someone you love is sick or suffering. I have felt the guilt and emptiness of having no other choice. I don't want anyone to feel that way," Albrecht said. "Pets give us unconditional love. That is reason enough." **GL**

Learn more at withlovefromlily.org and peacefulsoulsreiki.com.

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News roundup

Cooler air may be on the way

The town council has approved spending $600,000 on design specifications and electrical upgrades to allow four elementary schools to be air conditioned. Glastonbury High School, Smith Middle School and Nayaug Elementary School already have air conditioning, and further study is needed at Gideon Welles School. A final vote on the project is projected to come next year.

New assistant principal

Regina McGillivray has been hired as an assistant principal at Glastonbury High School. She replaces Mary Abrams, who retired. McGillivray has been assistant principal at the middle and high schools in Windsor locks and has served as the science curriculum coordinator there.

Trolley ornaments available

Local Cub Scout Pack 241 has been honoring the town's heritage for 27 years by selling ornaments with a historical scene. The sale, the pack's only fundraiser, supports activities such as camp-outs and guest speakers, and this year the scouts hope to raise money for a sleep-in on the USS Massachusetts battleship in Fall River, MA.

This year's theme is the Glastonbury trolley, part of a high-speed electric railway system dating back to 1892. It was discontinued in 1926 when the company went into foreclosure.

The 2017 ornament and ornaments from all past years are available at Emmy Lou's Limited, 17 Hebron Avenue and also can be ordered by sending an email to cubscouts@pack241.org. Each ornament is $0. The entire set is available for $207.

Looking ahead to 2018

Members of the board of education are considering the school calendar for the 2018-2019 year. As proposed, school would start August 29 for grades 7 through 12 and August 30 for kindergarten through sixth grade. In addition to regular holiday and Election Day closings, there would be no school February 18 and 19, which includes Presidents' Day, and April 15 to 19, which includes Good Friday. The last day of school, without any unplanned closings, would be June 10.

New police chief

Marshall Porter has been appointed chief of police. He served most recently as captain and executive officer for the Farmington Police Department and has worked in law enforcement for 26 years.

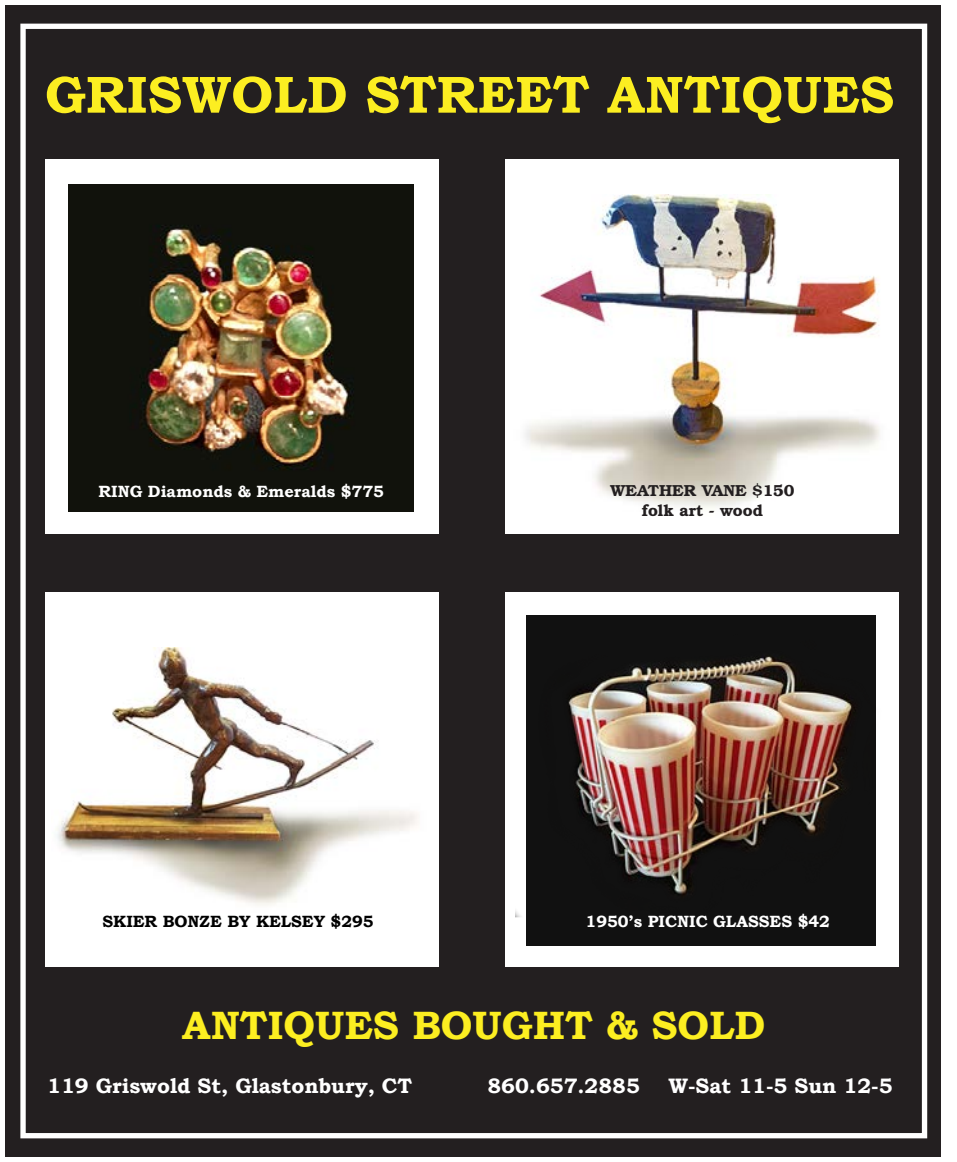
Trolley ornaments

Courtesy photo

He has an undergraduate degree in psychology and a master's degree in criminal justice, both from Central Connecticut State University.

Bookman's contract extended

The board of education has extended the contract of Superintendent Alan B. Bookman for an additional three years, through 2020. Bookman will receive a 2 percent raise and earn $257,928 during the 2018-2019 school year. Board members praised him as an excellent educator and a leader in and advocate for education. **GL**



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Nancy Thompson photo

Charlie Sorensen is an engineer who brews award-winning beers.

Brewer honors local history, wins awards

Charlie Sorensen combines art and science

by Nancy Thompson
Editor

As an engineer, Charlie Sorensen relies on science and precision. As the brewer of award-winning beer and ale, he enjoys adding creativity to the mix.

Sorensen, who lives near the waterway that gives his Salmon Brook Brewery its name, grew up along the Connecticut shore and earned a degree in civil engineering from Central Connecticut State University in 2007.

A short time later, he moved in with a couple of friends in a duplex in East Glastonbury. They'd made a few batches of beer, and Sorensen became involved in their hobby.

"We started to get serious about it," he said. "We had a lot of fun. We had some very good batches, and some that didn't turn out so well. One batch soured, and we had some exploding bottles."

After a couple of years, he bought a house closer to the town center and moved there with his wife-to-be, Teresa Arnold. "At that point the brewing became a solo venture," he said, adding that while his wife, a graphic designed, isn't involved in making the beers she creates labels for his brews. One, used for Sorensen's Thomas Hale Tavern Ale, shows the historic building on Main Street that is being rebuilt for use as a chapel and gathering place. Another, for his smoker porter, depicts the fish for which Salmon Brook was named.

"Charlie is basically a scientist when it comes to beer," Taylor said. "He studies all of the details that are part of the brewing process. His goal isn't so much aimed at opening a brewery, but rather in simply being outstanding at the craft."

"I brew some different ones for Christmas presents," he said, adding that craft beers are generally heavier and have a lot more flavor.

His special interest is in

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This design for smoked porter features the fish that for which Charlie Sorensen's Salmon Brook Brewery is named.

Trappist-style beers, the kind brewed by Trappist monks, most of whom are found in Belgium. "It's a nice balance of scientific methods and art," he said, adding that he studies Trappist brewing techniques "by reading and imbibing."

He's happy with his progress. "My beers have been steadily evolving as I delve into the science," he said. "There's a lot of literature out there. I do research online and use trial and error.

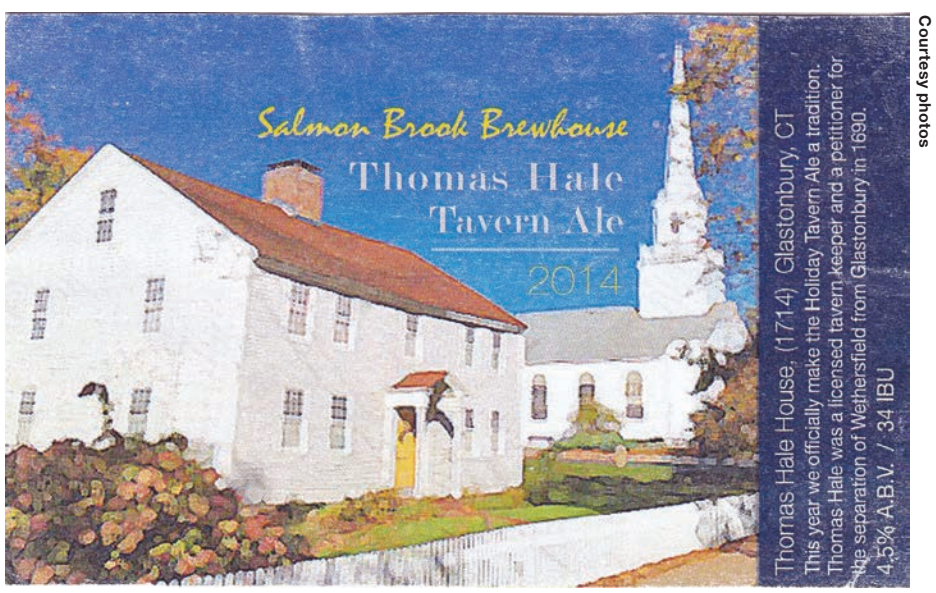
He enjoys experimenting, adjusting recipes by making a batch and then tweaking it. "Sometimes I split a batch and add a different ingredient or a different yeast to each part," he said. "Yeast is very noticeable and important and imparts a lot of flavor." He often gives the beer a second fermentation in the bottle.

"It's a Belgian thing," he said.

From time to time, Sorensen also brews some very dry cider. That too, is an opportunity for experimentation, as he's been known to add five bounds of blackberries to a five-gallon batch of cider.

Sorensen must be doing something right. He's been entering his brews in the wine and beer competition at the Hebron Fair since 2011 and has seven first-place ribbons for his efforts, including two best in show awards, one this year for his Tripel, a strong Trappist-style beer, and one in 2014 for an IPA. "I average one first-place a year," he said.

"I've known Charlie since grade school," said John Hall, one of Sorensen's roommates in East Glastonbury. "He's a brilliant engineer, an amazing old-time folk guitar player, and a really great brewer. When we were roommates, we started out brewing beer together as a fun little project. We were both big craft beer nerds and decided to give it a shot. We ended up brewing a few batches, some good and some bad, but after a while it was clear Charlie was the one who really seemed to have a knack and a passion for it, and really started taking brewing seriously. The work's paid off too, he's kind of taken a fun hobby and run with it, developing creative and exciting new recipes both traditional and cutting-edge. Granted, all his brewing is small-scale and I'm probably one of the lucky few folks who's gotten to try some of his beer, but he's brewing some of the best beer I've ever had." **GL**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The building that once housed the Hale Tavern on Main Street is featured on one of Charlie Sorensen's labels.

Courtesy photos

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December calendar

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

1 **Photo exhibit opening reception,** 7 to 8:30 p.m. CT Audubon Society Center, 1361 Main St. $30. 860-633-8402 or glastonbury@ctaudubon.org. Snow date December 2.

Performance of "Earth Suite" with double-neck guitarist Ian Ethan Case and members of the Hartford Symphony Orchestra including local musicians Tony Connaway and Yun-Yang Lin, 7:30 p.m., Congregational Church in South Glastonbury, 949 Main Street. Adults $18 in advance, $20 at the door. Students $10. IanEthan.com/Concerts.

2 **Lighting the Town Center,** 6 to 7 p.m., Fountain Green. Includes tree-lighting, refreshments and caroling. Rain will cancel. Sponsored by the Glastonbury Town Center Initiative. No charge.

"Support our Troops" collecting and packing, noon to 3 p.m., Elks Lodge, 98 Woodland Street, South Glastonbury. For details, or to donate merchandise or volunteer, contact Jerry McDonald, 860-368-1681 or gmcdonald7@att.net or Frank Forrest at 860-690-2845 or glastonburyvfw@aol.com.

3 **Santa's Run,** 8:30 a.m., Glastonbury High School, 330 Hubbard Street. $10 pre-registration through November 6, $15 November 6 through December 1, $20 on the day of the race. 860-652-7679 or recreation@glastonbury-ct.gov.

4 **Newspapers in the Civil War,** 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St., 6:30 p.m., Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St. Register at 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com

5 **Town council,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7710 or glastonbury-ct.gov.

Cautionary Tales ... or Tails? 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., CT Audubon Society Center, 1361 Main St. $5. 860-633-8402 or glastonbury@ctaudubon.org.

6 **Cleaning out toxins,** 6:30 p.m., Friends Room, Welles-Turner Memorial Library, 2407 Main St., Register at 860-652-7720 or wtmlib.com.

8 **Radio City Christmas Show bus trip**, 8 a.m. to 8:30 p.m., leaves from East Hartford/Glastonbury commuter parking lot. Open to residents and others. $145. 860-652-7679 or recreation@glastonbury-ct.gov.

Christmas on Minnechaug Mountain, acoustic bluegrass and country show, 7:30 p.m. Doors open at 6:45 p.m., Buckingham Congregational Church, 16 Cricket Lane. Adults $15, children younger than 12 $5. Tickets available only at the door. 860-633-7992.

Poetry reading by Sarah Giragosian, 6:30 to 8 p.m., CT Audubon Society Center, 1361 Main St. $5. 860-633-8402 or glastonbury@ctaudubon.org.

11 **Board of education**, 7:30 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. 860-652-7961 or glastonburyus.org

16 **Genealogy group sponsored by the Welsh Society of Western New England,** 10:15 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free for members, $10 for non-members. Participants are asked to bring their Welsh family tree and a lunch dish to share. Workshop will include a presentation on how to use genealogy and family history societies to further your research for research. Reserve a spot by emailing WelshWNE@gmail.com. Directions will be forwarded at that time.

19 **Town plan and zoning commission,** 7 p.m., town hall council chambers, 2155 Main St. glastonbury-ct.gov.

25 **Christmas. Town offices and library closed**. GL

Events spotlight

Courtesy photos

Lighting the town center

Christmas on Minnechaug Mountain

Lighting the town center

December 2, 6 to 7 p.m.
Fountain Green, corner of Hebron Avenue and Main Street
Glastonburytci.org

It's early December, so it must be time to gather in the town center to sing, chat with Santa, enjoy refreshments and watch the tree lighting. This is one of several events sponsored by the Town Center Initiative. There is no rain date, and the event will be cancelled in case of rain.

Earth Suite Orchestra

December 1, 7:30 p.m.
The Congregational Church in South Glastonbury, 949 Main Street, South Glastonbury
IanEthan.com/Concerts

Several professional musicians, including local cellist Yun-Yang Lin and her husband, bassist Tony Connaway, will join Ian Ethan Case in a preview of his new Earth Suite album.

Case, a double-neck guitarist and Candyrat recording artist, recorded much of the album in South Windsor with nearly a dozen musicians from around the world, along with his wife, sound specialist Stephanie Case. The two consider Glastonbury to be somewhat of a home because of their close friendship with Connaway and Lin, who helped arrange the Cases' first concert at The Listening Room, a house concert series run by Patti and Jim Cole. Since then, they have performed together twice at the Glastonbury Planetarium to sold-out audiences. Admission to the concert is $18 in advance and $20 at the door, with a $10 fee for children.

Earth Suite Orchestra

Christmas on Minnechaug Mountain

December 8, 7:30 p.m.
Buckingham Congregational Church, 16 Cricket Lane
860 633-7992

Local musician Amy Gallatin will perform with her partner, resophonic guitarist Roger Williams, the Blackstone Valley Bluegrass Band, and vocalist Karen Lincoln Wilbur in this annual holiday favorite.

The evening will feature upbeat, fun and familiar songs along with more contemplative, quiet music, all with a bluegrass flavor. Buckingham Congregational Church will feature its annual cookie walk during the intermission. Tickets, available only at the door, are $15, $5 for children younger than 12. Doors will open at 6:45 p.m. **GL**

Cancer survivors *from page 9*

Q. What are the biggest challenges for patients when they're diagnosed?

A. I think they are so overwhelmed with the diagnosis of cancer, they do not know what they need. There's an expectation that they are going to feel horrible as go through treatment and they just have to deal with it.

One of the big statistics we throw out there is that 65- to 90-percent of all cancer survivors are going to have at least one physical problem that rehab can help with. Right now, in the country there are 15 1/2 million cancer survivors so that's a lot of problems. Again, that culture's just so different, doctors didn't know anybody can help them through problems. They can screen patients for problems and refer them to a team of specialists that can help.

Q. What is survivorship?

A. Survivorship is the approach taken to address the long-term needs of cancer survivors. It includes monitoring for and managing long-term and late effects as well as health promotion from the cancer and from cancer treatment.

Q. How is cancer viewed differently today than it was years ago?

A. I think that cancer is much less scary now than it was, because we have the medical advances to treat it. We don't focus on the disease as much as really caring for the whole person. And for those people who have cancer diagnoses that can't be cured, it's very much thought of now as a chronic illness rather than terminal. We're all going to die of something eventually someday. Cancer, even though someone might have Stage 4, there's a lot more hope now with the disease. Now with the disease of cancer, we can help people live a very good life." **GL**

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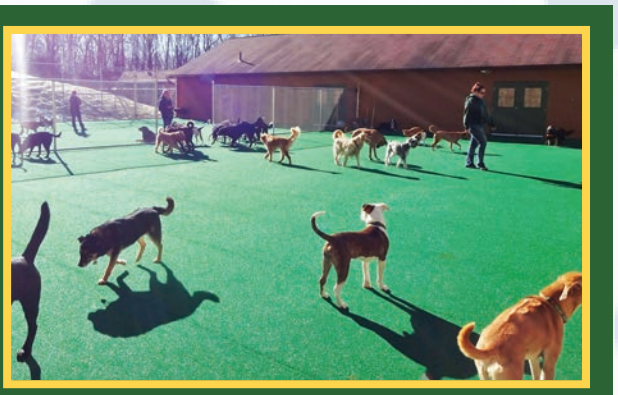

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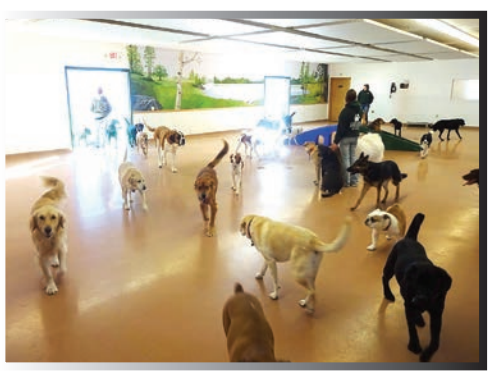

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Slice of LIFE

photos by Lisa Brisson

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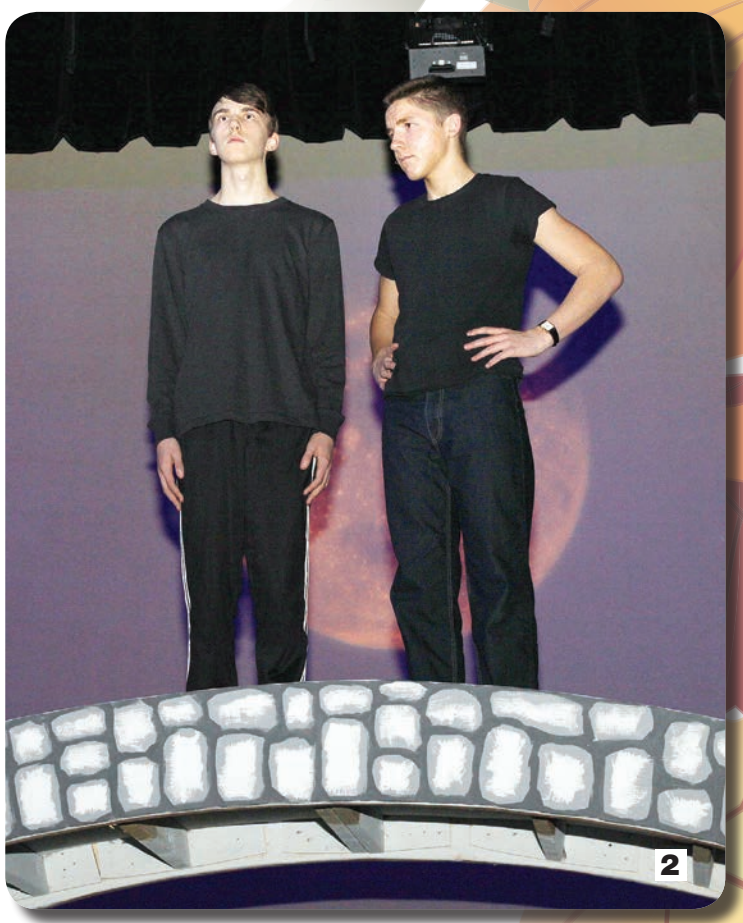
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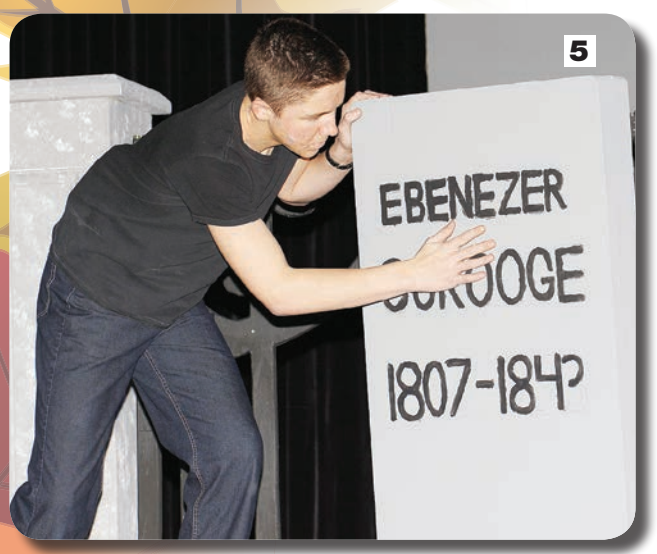
3A

Glastonbury High School Debuts "A Christmas Carol"

1. Jacob Schwartz (Peter Cratchit), Brianna Feliciano (Belinda Cratchit), Sophie Vredenburg (Mrs. Cratchit), Leslie Borsotti (Tiny Tina Cratchit), Luke Danko (Ebenezer Scrooge), Maren Kuzmak-Carlson (Anne Cratchit) and Fiona Jones (Martha Cratchit). **2.** Ryan Pisarski (Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come) and Luke Danko (Ebenezer Scrooge) **3A.** and **3B** Glastonbury High School Drama Club Co-Advisor Jeremy Gervais directs the rehearsal. **4.** Luke Danko (Ebenezer Scrooge), Dan Gorman (Fred Hollowell) and Julie Borsotti (Lily Hollowell) **5.** Luke Danko (Ebenezer Scrooge) **6.** Jake Schneider (School-aged Ebenezer Scrooge) and Luke Danko (Ebenezer Scrooge) **7.** Leslie Borsotti (Tiny Tina Cratchit) **8.** Barish Sengezen (Davie Cratchit) and Emma Harbec-Gavry (Broker #1)

3B
EBENEZER
SCROOGE
1807-184

4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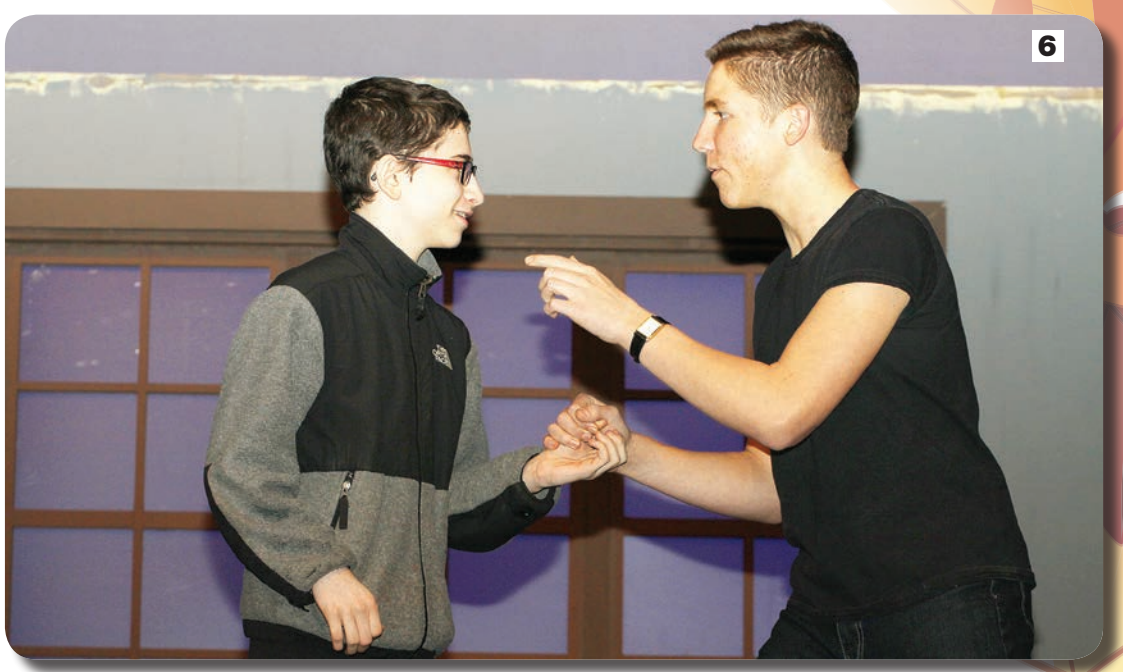
EBENEZER
1807-184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7

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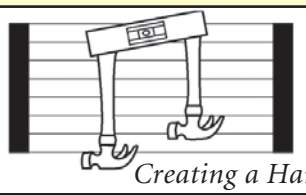

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Note from Nancy

In my Face(book)

This year is my 10th anniversary on Facebook. I pretty much hate it.

So why am I still connected? Better yet, why did I ever sign up?

The why-I-signed-up part is easy. My husband and I were on vacation and he mentioned that it appeared our son's back was getting better.

I had no idea what he was talking about. Apparently our son had mentioned on Facebook that he was feeling better, and my husband, one of his Facebook friends, read the post.

I had no real interest in social media – still don't, truth be known – but decided that I needed to join if only to find out what our kids were up to.

I joined in July of 2007 and became "friends" with my husband, our daughter and our son.

This was one of my first posts, directed to our computer guru son: "Excuse my social naiveté, but is Facebook beating out Myspace? (I know... duh, eye-roll...)" I don't remember his reply, but I'm sure it was kind, even though he certainly was rolling his eyes.

Over the next few years, I made new "friends" and started posting more often. It was a handy way to reconnect with old friends, which became easier once I inserted my pre-marriage name. I've enjoyed birthday wishes sent and received, getting inside information about the UConn women's basketball team, learning about new grandchildren, homes, pets, and jobs – or more commonly, retirement therefrom – and sharing photos of trips, snowstorms, and assorted celebrations.

I was even able to track down a cousin or two in Nova Scotia, and that has led to phone calls and promises of a visit next summer. Never underestimate the value of sending a Facebook message to a complete stranger. Every now and then that person is actually who you hope it might be.

Lately, though, Facebook has been taking more and more of my time, not reading or writing messages, but deleting them.

I try to get rid of the partisan political stuff whether I agree with it or not, and there seems to be more of that every day.

Some people simply post too often. They use Facebook like Twitter, writing stuff about watching the kids brush their teeth before getting them out the door in the morning. Really? Am I supposed to care?

And photos... For some reason, if someone posts an album, the photos not only show up in the album, but also individually, one after another. When friends went on vacation recently, they posted more than 30 photos every single day, and I couldn't see the next post until I scrolled through– and deleted – every one of them.

And ads... Not the paid ads, which are bad enough, but posts from friends promoting their bands and lawn care services and the like. It's visual telemarketing, and I like seeing it as much as I like hearing it when the phone rings.

For a while last week I was thinking seriously about canceling my account, but I'm reconsidering. Why?

For all my complaining, there are some posts I really do enjoy. We have friends in Maine who post memes featuring Macavity, their very wise kitty, with his wit and wisdom on just about everything. I enjoy seeing posts from family members and close friends. And I love the quotes that people often post, usually without explanation.

Here are a few of them:

"It is not doing the thing we like to do, but liking the thing we have to do."

In ancient times cats were worshipped as gods; they have not forgotten this. – *Terry Pratchett*

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that." – *Martin Luther King*

"Any book worth banning is a book worth reading." – *Isaac Asimov*

And this, from an unknown, but very wise, person: "Sometimes, brisket makes everything better."
– *Nancy Thompson*

BY MARK DIXON
WFSB METEOROLOGIST [AMS]

First, Winter Storm Names...

Naming winter storms is unique to WFSB, dating back to the days of the Travelers Weather Service. It's a tradition that started in 1971, that our station is proud to carry on today!

Names are easy to remember, especially the ones that have been attached to Connecticut's biggest winter storms. If you've lived in Connecticut long enough you'll remember Blizzard Larry (the Blizzard of '78); or, perhaps the big ice storm of December 1973 named Felix. In this decade, there was Storm Alfred in late October of 2011 when heavy, wet snow caused a record power outage. And, it was Blizzard Charlotte that dumped up to 40" of snow on the state in 2013.

In order for a storm to get a name, it has to meet certain criteria: we must expect at least 6" of snow for much of the state, and/or ½" of ice accretion (a significant ice storm).

When it comes to the list of names, past themes have included "former First Ladies" and notable sports figures with ties to Connecticut. For this season, we had our team of reporters (since they're the ones having to be live from the field, 'in' the storms) provide 2 names each for a letter of the alphabet and then let our viewers vote on Facebook. **GL**

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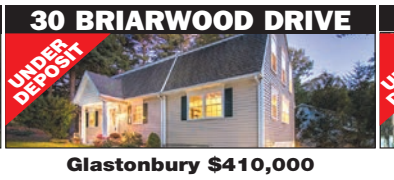

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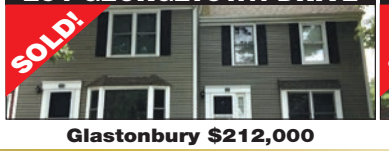

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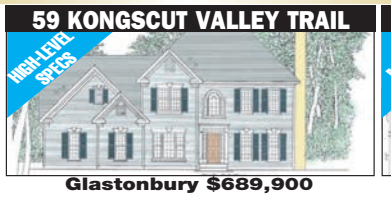
59 KONGSCUT VALLEY TRAIL


Glastonbury $689,900

114 KONGSCUT VALLEY TRAIL

Glastonbury $679,900

LOT 9 KONGSCUT VALLEY TRAIL

Glastonbury $655,000

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